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Vol. I

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## THOSE QUIET TWINS. By PETER PAD.



The two boys proceeded to fasten a pack of fire-crackers to each pair of dangling coat-tails. Clem and the Chinaman were especially favored, but everybody had something. There was lots of fun in store for that row of spectators, but not of the kind that they anticipated.



The very moment those infernal machines began to go off, that moment, with remarkable and surprising unanimity, the whole gang pitched head foremost off the fence.



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# THOSE QUIET TWINS.

By PETER PAD,

Author of "The Shortys Out Fishing," "Sam," "The Funny Four," "Joe Junk the Whaler," "Bob Rollick, the Yankee Notion Drummer," "The Shortys Married and Settled Down," "Bob Rollick; or, What Was he Born For?" "Ebenezer Crow," "Stump; or, Little, but Oh, My!" "Chips and Chin-Chin," "Stuttering Sam," "Tommy Bounce," "Tom, Dick, and the —," "Shorty; or, Kicked Into Good Luck," "Shorty in Search of His Dad," "Tommy Dodd," "The Shortys' Trip Around the World," "Tumbling Tim," "Boar i-ing-School," "The Shortys Out for Fun," "The Shortys Out Gunning," "The Shortys' Farming," "Behind the Scenes; or, Out With a New York Combination," "Sam Spry, the New York Drummer," "The Shortys' Country Store," "Joseph Jump and His Old Blind Nag," "Jack Hawser's Tavern," "The Shorty Kids; or, Three Chips of Three Old Blocks," etc., etc.

## CHAPTER I.

PETER NETTLEBONE enjoyed no astounding distinction beyond being an honest man and at the same time a rich one. But he was a farmer, or all that.

By a lucky turn in the tide of his affairs in California he made a handsome fortune and was sensible enough to retire on it and let well enough alone, although it wasn't his nature to remain quiet by any means.

He was an enthusiast in whatever he undertook, about fifty-five years of age, a bachelor, and his only general drawback was that he was somewhat deaf.

This particular ailment acted strangely, too. If he caught cold he was very deaf, but when without one he could hear a great many things not so loud as a pistol-shot.

Well, the result of his return from the more or less golden shores, and the more or less glorious climate of California, was that he bought a fine farm in New Jersey, on which he proposed to astonish this half of the Western Hemisphere by raising grapes for the market and for the wine-press, he having given the business much study and attention while residing in California.

But he had many new ideas himself and brought half a dozen Frenchmen along with him who were experts in grape culture. So at the end of three years he had twenty or thirty acres well a-going.

He built additional buildings and the agricultural papers began to speak of him as the coming grape raiser of the country, and all the while he was not only happy himself, but seemed anxious to make others so.

He believed in having a model farm, a model vineyard, and a model home for his help, all of which he boarded, lodged, and did their washing.

And Peter Nettlebone was happy.

Mrs. Roriarity, a buxom Irish widow, was his chief cook and housekeeper, assisted by a young colored girl who acted as bed-maker.

In the far end of the kitchen, where the washing was going on pretty nearly all the time, there was a presiding genius by the name of Yum Bung, a Chinaman that Mr. Nettlebone had brought from the Golden Shores, simply because he liked the way he ironed his socks.

Mrs. Roriarity, of course, didn't like him, but that didn't disturb Yum Bung in the least. He kept right on with his regular boiling, scrubbing, rinsing, hanging out, taking in and doing up, just as though there had been nobody else about the place.

And now, having got a glimpse of Mr. Nettlebone's surroundings, let us go and find those quiet twins, since they will be likely to do the most lively part of the figuring during the run of this story.

There is nothing strange, crooked or mysterious about them.

They are simply known as twins—Timmy and Jimmy.

They are about thirteen years of age, two bright, quiet, handsome fellows, who look as much alike as two peas in a pod, and this is greatly heightened by their dressing alike in every particular.

This afforded them heaps of opportunities for fun, which they quietly enjoyed.

They lived in New York with their parents. They went to school. They had fun in a quiet way.

Their mother was very proud of them, especially since the return of her brother with a fortune, and she began at once to school them, so there should be no mistake that they should keep in Peter's good graces, for, of course, he couldn't live always.

The twins seemed to take it all in, and whenever their uncle came to visit them they were model boys, and he was very proud of them.

But there was one individual who took no stock at all in it—that was their father.

"Those boys are making a fool of you all the time," said he to her.

"What do you mean?" she asked.

"Simply that they are a pair of quiet-looking, smooth-faced guyers. They do not laugh, but I tell you they are as full of the Old Nick as any two boys I ever knew of yet."

"Why, William! Your own sons!"

"That's the reason I know them."

"Why, Mrs. Burleigh was saying only the other day that our Jimmy and Timmy were the best behaved boys at the Sunday-school picnic."

"Yes, and they are the very ones who put a frog in her ice cream," said the fond father, laughing.

"What!" exclaimed the mother.

"Fact. I saw them do it."

This rather broke the admiring mother up. The frog snap had been a great scandal.

Mr. Bing, however, was a happy-go-lucky sort of a man, and he took pleasure in watching their quiet pranks while the mother was being hoodwinked in such a quiet way.

It was near the end of the school term at the time of my story, when Uncle Peter Nettlebone paid them a visit in New York.

"Nancy, those boys are overworked at school. See how pale and thin they look. That's not right. They don't do things as they used to when you and I went to the old red school-house on the hill," said Peter.

"Yes, they have worked very hard this term, so ambitious are they to gain medals," said she.

"Medals be hanged! A pair of red cheeks, bright eyes and elastic limbs is the brightest medal a child can carry. Let them come out to the farm and spend their vacation with me, and I warrant it will do them a world of good," said he, with honest earnestness.

"Would you like to have them there?" asked the artful mother and sister.

"Would I? Why, they come nearest to my own children of anything I have got, and I think full as much of them," said he.

"But won't they bother you?"

"No, no. Send them along just as quick as school is over. I'll make it pleasant for them."

That night when she was telling her husband all about it he said:

"All right. I'd like to have the boys go out there to spend their vacation first rate, for Peter is one of the nicest old fellows in the world, and has got a splendid place. But if those quiet youths don't make it lively for the old man and everybody on the place I will have no more to say."

"I don't believe it, and besides, I shall give them a good lecture before they go, and, of course, we shall go out and see them once or twice during their stay," said she.

"All right; let them go," said he, laughing.

So it was arranged.

Now, how did Jimmy and Timmy Bing feel about the matter?

They had a quiet way of swapping winks that was very significant, and that was about all they did when starting or tumbling to anything.

But the truth was they were delighted with the idea. They didn't care a snap for their Uncle Peter's money, which their mother had hinted might be theirs if they were good boys and kept on his tender side. But they honestly liked the old man, and understood that they could do about as they liked at his home, and that was enough for them.

They had never yet been to his farm, but they had heard their father tell all about it, and when they talked the matter over after their mother's lecture, the conclusion they came to was that they would have a bushel of fun before time called them back to school again, or they would claw around and learn the reason why.

So the very first day of the long vacation those quiet twins arrived at the depot, about three miles from the Grapery, and Uncle Peter Nettlebone was there with his carriage to receive them, glad enough that they had come, he having reckoned on it.

He took them and their luggage home, where, of course, he introduced them to his housekeeper, Mrs. Roriarity, whom he had before notified to have their chamber ready and everything made pleasant for his two nephews who were to visit him.

But he had not told her they were twins and looked as like as two pills, and the good old dame was all taken aback.

"Faix, an' which is which?" she asked, after looking at them a moment.

"Well, Mrs. Roriarity, for that matter, I can't hang if I can tell myself. You must ask yourselves to Mrs. Roriarity," he said.

"I am Jimmy—"

"And I am Timmy Bing."

"Oh, ye are, hoy?" said she, looking from one



to the other, while Uncle Peter stood by laughing. "Sure we'll have ter put a mark on one av yees, so we will," but she proceeded to bestow them comfortably.

"Now, my dear boys, I want you to consider yourselves perfectly at home. There is nothing on the farm too good for you, and I want you to romp and have all the sport you possibly can while you stay here. You are too backward and bashful; you have not had freedom enough. Will you go it?"

"We shall try to have a good time, Uncle Peter, and not bother you any more than we can help," said Jimmy.

"Oh, bother the bothering me. Bother anybody you like. Now go for a romp."

This was one of the old man's good hearing days, and he was more than usually happy.

Well, he returned to his office, for he had things to do in style, and the twins began to size up the place for themselves.

Naturally they drifted toward the kitchen, where they had as yet made their first and only acquaintance.

There they found Mrs. Roriarity at work, humming a merry tune the while.

"She's a good one," whispered Jimmy, as they entered the broad door of the room where she was at work.

"I think so," replied Timmy.

It was a pretty domestic scene. The sun was shining in at the broad windows, the pots and kettles were steaming away, and everything about the large kitchen looked bright, clean and cheerful.

She quickly espied them.

"Ah, there! Are yees makin' ther acquaintance av ther place, me lads?" she asked.

"Yes, we were looking around a bit."

"That's roight, and, sure, if it is meself that says it, yees did well in makin' friends and acquaintance wid ther kitchen fust. Sure, yer a nice pair av b'ys if yees didn't look so much aloike. How wud yees loike somethin' ther loikes av that?" she asked, taking a couple of fried apple turnovers from a box.

"They look real nice," they both said.

"An' if they arn't as good as they look then the cook isn't," said she, giving one of the luscious turnovers to each of the youngsters.

There was no need of their saying anything to express how good they were, for that goodness reflected from their face.

They were solid with the cook from the start, that was something they had never known before.

"Arrah, but I know fut'll catch ther youngsters," said she, proudly.

"I should think they might catch old birds as well as young ones," said Timmy.

"Och, and so they do. But I only gives 'em yer uncle an' those I loikes. I'm fond av quiet boys. Me son Barney—" and she lifted her apron to her eyes.

"Is he quiet?" asked Jimmy.

"Yes—poor b'y—he's dead."

She sighed. It did really seem to the twins she might be quiet then.

But he was the Ould Harry's b'y afore he died on that freight-car. Worra, worra, worra! But wailin' won't bring him back any more. It will me ould man. Never moind! Have ther poie, for it's quite awhile yet afore yer uncle will be afther atin' his dinner;" and she didn't make either one of them mad by giving them each another turnover.

Then she turned to her work, and the delighted boys went out of doors to take a look about while they were getting outside of their treat, and they presently came upon Yum Bung, who was engaged in hanging out clothes.

They had heard of him before.

They parted company a few yards, and each suddenly appeared to the right and to the left of him.

Jimmy had his pie to his mouth, and Yum Bung gazed at him in astonishment.

The boys stood perfectly motionless.

Timmy made a slight noise, and Yum Bung looked suddenly to his left.

There seemed to be the very counterpart of the other, pie and all.

He was confounded, never having heard anything about the twins.

He stood with an unpinned garment in his hand—a clothespin in his mouth.

Then he looked back at Jimmy, and saw him eating his pie.

This was getting mixed.

Had he all of a sudden gone off his nut? Glancing at Timmy, he saw him also bite into his pie in the same way.

"Boo!" said Jimmy.

"Boo!" echoed Timmy.

This was too much for the Chinaman, and uttering some sort of a yop, he made a break for the laundry, and from there into the kitchen.

terer some sort of a yop, he made a break for the laundry, and from there into the kitchen.

"Fut ther divil's aillin' yees now, ye wild-eyed hathin?" demanded the cook.

"See!" said he, pointing out to the lawn, and he was so frightened that he couldn't say anything else.

Mrs. Roriarity went out to see what the trouble was.

Neither of the boys were there.

"Are ye crazy? Sure there's nothin' there but yer muslin. Go 'way wid ye," she said, pushing him out of the door.

Yum Bung was naturally inclined to believe in witchcraft and such absurdities, and after looking carefully around for awhile, he concluded it was something of the kind, and 'tremblingly resumed his work, while the boys went down to inspect the barn.

They found that it belonged to a progressive farmer, and that it contained every convenience, every modern improvement, for, although the raising of grapes was his chief hobby, yet he prided himself on his farm as well.

They found everything there belonging to a farm.

They also espied several game cocks.

There might be some fun in them.

They took in many interesting objects, nearly every one of which was covered with grapevines.

And there was a dashing brook coming down from the hills for the benefit of the vineyard.

Jimmy and Timmy talked over the idea of making a water-mill to drive some machinery on a small scale.

Indeed, before they had been three hours on the place, they had laid out enough to do for many weeks.

They were delighted with the prospect, and told good Uncle Peter so at his office.

His office wasn't in his house. It was pleasantly situated out on a lawn near the road leading past the door.

It was covered with vines and flowers and showed that Uncle Peter was a man of tenderness and refinement.

"May we build a little mill up here on the stream, Uncle Peter?" asked Jimmy.

"Build a mill! Why, you may build mills all up and down the stream, and if it isn't long enough to build all you want, I'll buy the remainder of it right away," replied Uncle Peter, in his cheery, earnest way.

"You are so kind," they both said, surer than ever that they had a brilliant vacation before them.

"Well, I like you boys and want everything on the place to lend itself toward making you as happy as I am at having you here. But come, the signal is out from the dining-room that dinner is ready, and you must be wolfish," said he, starting for the house.

"We should have been had it not been for Mrs. Roriarity," said Tim.

"Indeed! She's a good old soul."

"She gave us each two lovely turnovers."

Uncle Peter instantly thought that that would add to her Christmas.

Yes, a good substantial dinner was ready, and Yum Bung was all ready to serve it, that being a portion of his duty to wait on Mr. Nettlebone's table.

Yum discovered the twins for the second time as they followed their uncle into the dining-room.

"Oh, ah! How be?" he asked of his master.

"How what be? What in the world are you glaring at?" he demanded, and the boys began to laugh.

"Me no understand."

"Well, these are my nephews, come to live with me. They are twins. Do you understand it now?"

Yum Bung nodded, but he had to laugh with the boys over the queer contretemps.

Jimmy then told his uncle all about it, and the fun of the thing seemed to warm the old man up and to show that he enjoyed it.

The Chinaman, however, was very much puzzled and pleased withal.

He had seen twins once or twice in his life, but never so very like in every respect as these were.

He tried to tell Mrs. Roriarity about them when he went to the kitchen for more food, but she lost patience as usual. He seldom spoke to her or she to him, beyond the mere forms of business.

"Now fut are yees drivin' at now?" she demanded.

"Dinin' loom—two bloy."

"Well, fut av it?"

"Bloy selare me outie yard."

"Och, faith, it wudn't take a b'y so big as wan av them ter scare yees. Go on about yer business."

Well, in this way the boys soon became known to everybody on the farm and about the house, so that by the third day of their visit they were respected curiosities to those who did wish to express themselves more freely respecting their employer's family and household.

About that time Mr. Nettlebone felt the need of a man of all work, and as he had several nationalities already, he concluded to advertise for a Southern negro.

This he did, and the twins were on the qui vive to see the samples that would answer the advertisement.

Uncle Peter said he didn't expect anybody until the first train got in, but the old man was early in his office, and the boys out for an appetite.

## CHAPTER II.

THEY were knocking a bull along the smooth roadway in front of the house, when all of a sudden a black, ragged apparition appeared before them.

It was a big, fat negro, evidently a Southern one, wearing an old plug hat that he might have found in Dixey after everybody else got done wearing it, and the same might be said of the other portions of his wardrobe.

But to crown all was a grin that he wore on his big, fat mug, and which never seemed to fade or diminish.

"I'll bet he's after the job," said Jimmy.

"I hope so," replied Timmy, "for there is ten barrels of fun in him, I'll bet."

"Good-mornin', boys," he said, changing his old grip-sack to the right hand so as not to interfere with the wave of his hand.

"Good-morning," the boys replied.

"Am dis yer der place, honey, where somebody advertises fo' a pusson to make himself genuly useful 'bout a farm?"

"Yes, this is the place, and you being the early bird, ought to get the worm."

"Wal, chile, I'se not particular 'bout wums, but I'd like a job."

"All right, what's your name?"

"Clem Brown, from Car'lina."

"Good enough so far. Come and let us introduce you to our uncle and see how he sizes you up."

"Golly, I guess I size up all right," said he, as he followed them into the office of Peter Nettlebone.

They presented him in due form.

"Uncle Nettlebone, this is Clem Brown, from the South, looking for that job."

The old gentleman looked up at his new-comer, nearly as much astonished at the style of his introduction as the moke with the grin and the gripsack was himself.

"Do you understand farm work—work around barns and outhouses?"

"I was bone to it, boss," said Clem.

"But were you bred to it?"

"Allus earned my bread dat way, boss," and Uncle Peter saw by the looks of his nephews that for some reason or other they were in his favor.

This of itself was an inducement for him to hire him, and besides, he was a big, strapping fellow and ought to be able to do a deal of work.

"Shua I should like to work fo' you, boss. I can handle hosses, mules and Jacks."

"What are you grinning at?" asked the old man, who had noticed that he had not removed either his hat or his grin since entering the office.

"I war bone dat way, boss. 'Spect dat ebrybody laughed when I fust comed to town, an' I cotched it fo' keeps," answered Clem.

"Well, Mr. Brown, I don't mind your grin if you do your work. I'll try you for a while and see how you get along. Breakfast will soon be ready, and Mrs. Roriarity will show you a room, after which I will show you what work I have for you to do. Boys, I am finishing up some writing—just show this man to the housekeeper. She can put him wherever she likes."

This of course was nuts for those quiet twins, and they escorted him into the kitchen where Mrs. Roriarity was at work.

"Fut have yees there?" she asked, starting back in astonishment.

"Uncle Peter's new man, Clem Brown," said Jimmy.

"Happy fo' to make you 'quaintance," said Clem, looking at her with that grin.

"Well, fut will Mr. Nettlebone get in ther household next? Faith, he has a regular museum here, but this one takes the cake," said she, looking Clem over.

"Oh, he's all right," said they.

"Fut are yer grinnin' at?" she demanded, as he continued to look at her.

"I was bone dat way, missus."



"Well, I should say so. I've seen many a nagger, but yees are the homeliest wan I iver seen. Go away!" she cried.

"Whar I deposit my baggage?"

"Baggage! Der yer call that thing by ther name av baggage? Here, Peggy, come here, will yees?" she added, calling to the colored chamber girl.

"What is it, Mrs. Roriarity?" asked the bright mulatto girl, answering.

"Put is it? Luck at it, an' if yees can tell me yees can have it," said she, pointing to Clem, who now turned his grin upon the girl.

"Heavens!" exclaimed the girl, who was rather an airy piece.

"It's Clem Brown, Miss Peggy."

"What are you going to do with him?"

"Take him up-stairs an' show him wan av those little vacant bedrooms. He's Mr. Nettlebone's new man, Lord save us!" she said, turning away, while Peggy led Clem Brown to his new quarters.

How those boys did laugh at the reception he got, and because Mrs. Roriarity came so near losing her temper.

"That bates ther worruld," she muttered, at her work.

"Oh, Clem's all right," persisted the boys.

"An' sure I guess yees have a fondness for such a big grinning baboon as he is. I think yer after fun wid him."

"Why, he's funny without touching him," replied Jimmy, laughing.

"Begorra, but he'll spoil ther appetite av the rest av ther laborers," she mused.

Indeed, Clem did create a sensation among them when he came to the breakfast table, both by his general appearance and the way he got on the outside of grub.

He acted as though he hadn't had a square meal in a month, but when he had retired everything within reach he concluded to choke himself off and find out what the boss had for him to do.

Mr. Nettlebone took him in charge, and set him to spreading manure the first day so as to size him up.

Clem Brown and work had never been friends, not loving ones, but he saw that he had too soft a thing in this place to shirk on, so he stripped for work.

And what a stripping that was.

He removed as many as four old vests before he came to his shirt, and these he placed on the ground on top of his two coats, and then he peeled off three extra pairs of old pants.

Mr. Nettlebone and the boys watched him, and as the weather was very warm, they wondered how so fat a person as he was ever managed to live in all those old clothes, and what he wanted of them.

Well, once peeled for business, Clem looked more like doing work than before.

Seizing a fork, he began to work like a beaver, showing what he could do if he was so inclined.

Mr. Nettlebone and his nephews went in to breakfast soon after, and of course they talked over the events of the morning, the old man feeling certain that the boys had some secret object in wanting to get that fat, homely negro on the place.

But he might turn out a good hand after all, and that was all he wanted of a man he hired.

After breakfast they saw him still at work, and he came up to get a drink of water at the pump and ask further instructions.

While Clem was at dinner those quiet twins went and dug a hole, into which they tumbled his old duds and covered them up as nicely as you please, Uncle Peter being away on horseback to some other part of the farm or entertaining some other enthusiast on grapes like himself by showing his various varieties.

Well, that was all right, and they concluded that it would do the clothes good, even if he didn't find them for a week.

But when night came Clem went in search of his wardrobe. He had been at work in two or three small fields that day, and he was somewhat mixed.

Seeing the boys engaged in some sort of sport on the lawn, he approached them.

"Chillun, hab you noticed any tramps 'roun' heah to-day?" he asked.

"No. Why?"

"Den whar am my garments?" he asked, with a sort of a whine, and yet he continued to wear that grin.

"Your garments? Haven't you got them on?" asked Timmy.

"Dis yer am only a potion ob my wardrobe. I lay der superflosity down on de ground some-whar, an' can't find 'em no mo'."

On the ground? Well, probably the man plowed them under, mistaking them for manure.

You should be more careful with your wardrobe, Clem."

"Plow under? Oh, all dem good clus!" he moaned and grinned.

"There goes the supper bell," said Timmy.

"Yes, good Lord!" said he, and forgetting all about his lost vesture, he made a wild break for the laborers' hall.

He clung to the grub as long as it lasted, and then began to make inquiries regarding his lost clothes, especially of Pat Malone, the man who had been plowing after his spreading during a portion of the day.

"Yer clothes, is it—an' did I plow them under?" asked Pat. "I hope so, if yer goin' ter stay around here long," was all the satisfaction he got out of him.

But he was bound not to give it up until he had asked everybody if they had seen his "clus," even to Yum Bung, the Chinaman.

The affair produced a deal of fun for everybody about the place, but although Clem wore his grin, yet he was sad, and contrast was funnier than anything else.

"I guess your clothes were no great loss, Clem," said Mr. Nettlebone, of whom he had been inquiring regarding them. "You go to work hoeing those potatoes and I will buy you a new suit worth them all."

"Oh, my, my good Lord!" he exclaimed and started for the field where the Murphys were a-growing.

Mr. Nettlebone went to town that day and there bought two pairs of bedticking overalls of the loudest and largest size, reaching nearly to his chin in front and the nape of his neck behind.

Clem was delighted and never stopped to think how comical he looked in them, and when others laughed at him he thought it a sort of approving envy.

He certainly looked a great deal wholesomer and cleaner with his new clothes, which Mr. Nettlebone must have bought to please his nephew as much as his man, but with that same old hat and those rusty brogans, he still looked as though made up to laugh at. But he was proud enough.

But he proved a himself a good farm hand during the first week, which satisfied Mr. Nettlebone, and he furnished fun enough to please the boys, so it was all right.

"Didn't we tell you that Clem was all right, Mrs. Roriarity?" asked the twins one day soon after the moke came out with his new and decidedly "coon" harness on.

"Sure, he'd make a pig laugh," said he.

"Then what's the matter with Clem?"

"Och, sure it's for yer own fun yees kape him. But I don't blame yees. Here is a bite for yees," she added, going to the box and giving each of them a turnover.

Perhaps they refused to take them.

That day Uncle Peter had several grape and fruit-growers to dinner, and the boys had to dine with Mrs. Roriarity while they talked learnedly about the different varieties of grapes, their culture and tasted the different sorts of wine that Mr. Nettlebone had produced in his short practical experience.

But after the party had gone out into the trel-lised fields to see the grapes, those quiet twins found about a quart of some sort of wine and said they thought it was just exactly what Clem Brown needed, being at work out in the hot sun.

So they got a small tin pail and took it down to where he was hoeing potatoes.

They stood in the shade near the fence and beckoned him.

"Would you like some of uncle's wine?" asked Jimmy, very quietly.

"Oh, chillun, don' make my mouf water like dat! Ob cose I would," said he.

"And can you keep mum?"

"Oh, fo' shuah."

"Never give us away?"

"Neber—neber!"

"All right. Here is some that those old roosters had left after inner. Drink it quick and keep mum," said Jimmy, handing him the pail that contained nearly a quart.

"Oh, my!" he cried, and seizing the pail, he drank every drop before taking it from his big and eager mouth.

"Now, mind, not a word to anybody, or you might lose your job," said Timmy.

"Oh, my, neber a word. Golly, arn't that good!" he added to himself, as he returned to his work.

The boys took the pail to the pump and rinsed it, after which they placed it among some other tinware that was drying in the sun and escaped all notice.

But it wasn't long before they heard Clem singing down in the field, and they went where they could take a quiet look at him. He was singing that old plantation melody:

"Ding-dong, skip it along.  
De oberseer am gone,  
Ole massa's heah himself to cheer  
De darkies wedding song."

The boys laughed, but were glad that Uncle Peter was not there just then.

"I say, Timmy, I don't see why he can't sing two parts at once. His mouth is big enough."

"That's so. See him make that hoe go."

"And see him make those poor potato-tops go. He's crazy. Hadn't we better skip?"

"Oh, he's all right. See, he stops to rest."

Clem Brown felt happy, but for a fact he never felt more like resting in his life.

Besides, the potatoes would get in the way and get hoed out of a living.

He mopped his big mug and looked around.

There was nobody in sight, but there was a shady tree standing near the fence, and—and he concluded to rest.

So he made his way down into the cool shade, sat down against the fence and closed his eyes for an indefinite period.

He was very tired, was that moke.

"That settles it. Let's go down and see him."

"Not yet. I have an idea. Come on," and he led the way to the shop where a little of everything was done.

Taking a piece of board and a small paint-brush, he painted this sign:

"A COLORED MAN WANTS A JOB."

This done, they went down into the field where Clem was playing on his bassoon.

That same grin was on his mug, and the flies were going in and out as if it had been a cave.

He was a picture, indeed, and the boys had any quantity of quiet laugh over it.

Finally they took his hoe and stuck it into the ground in front of him, and on it hung the sign they had painted.

And then they quietly lit out, not knowing how soon Uncle Peter would return.

And Clem Brown quietly slept on.

#### CHAPTER III.

MR. NETTLEBONE returned in about an hour, and not seeing Clem Brown about his work, went down into the lot to see what had become of him.

The sign on the hoe naturally attracted his attention first, and then glancing to the right, under the tree, the whole picture burst upon his astonished view.

Of course he instantly knew that the boys must have put up the sign, and this, whatever the cause Clem's delinquency, caused the old man to laugh heartily.

And this in turn caused the twins to take heart, and they ventured down to the fence to see what would follow.

Mr. Nettlebone walked up to the sleeping darky and kicked his shins.

"Wake up, here, you lazy coon. What are you doing down here when you should be at work?"

Clem opened his eyes and rubbed them.

His senses came back to him quickly, and he knew he had got to get out of the snap somehow, or get out of his place.

He saw the sign on the hoe, but could scarcely make it out.

"Get up here, you lazy nigger!"

"Boss, don't be hard on me," said he, struggling with his feet.

"Hard on you?"

"I's had a fit."

"A fit? Well, I should say so, by the looks of t' lot of potatoes," said the old man, pointing to several hills he had slashed with his hoe.

"Boss, excuse me; I war bone dat way—hab t' firs ebbery year," said he, pulling up his hoe and throwing away the sign that by this time he had tumbled to.

"Well, have you got through with this one?" asked Mr. Nettlebone.

"Yes, sah, purty much."

"Well, then, go to work, and the next time you have one take a day off," and the old man, trying to repress a smile, went up to where his nephews were.

"The old man smiles," said Jimmy, as his uncle approached.

"Oh, Unc Pete's all right," replied Timmy.

"So I see you managed to have a little fun with the darky," said he, pleasantly.

"Yes, sir. We found him asleep and thought it would be a good joke."

"And so it was—first rate. He says he had a fit. Did you see anything of it?"

"No, sir—unless it was a fit of sleeping."

"I half suspect that was the kind of a one it was. But if it were possible for him to get at any of my fermented wine I should call him drunk."

Left alone, the boys sauntered down on the outside of a partition fence where they could see the broken up moke.

He still wore his grin, but there was a blending of sadness with it that did not make him look entirely happy.

On the contrary, he looked badly broken up and rocky, for the wine the twins had given him, and which tasted so good, was a sample of some in a state of fermentation approaching brandy. Mr. Nettlebone had been showing several samples to his guests and fellow wine-growers.



They listened a few yards behind him to hear what he was saying, for by the way he was striking his hoe into the soil it would seem that he was angry about something.

"I—I jus' took dem little debels an' I broke 'em in two," they heard him say.

"That settles us," whispered Jimmy.

"Dat wur a trick ter get me drunk. I don b'lieve it war wine at all. Call dem nice, quiet boys! Butta won't melt in dar mous, eh? All right; I keep my eye on dem ycuks after dis yer, bet on dat."

"Hello, Clem!" called Timmy.

Clem looked up and almost forgot his grin.

"Do you know wha' I's good mind fo' to do?"

"Wouldn't buy a pool on it," said Timmy.

"I's good mind fo' to murder you boys."

"What's the matter with not murdering us?"

"What for, Clem?"

"Fo' givin me dat wine an' gettin' me sleepin' drunk fo' de boss to catch."

"Pshaw! It is all your own fault. We offered you a drink out of the pail; we didn't know you were going to make a hog of yourself."

"Dat's so. But how 'bout dat sign on my hoe?"

"Well, we didn't know but Uncle Peter would discharge you. So we thought we'd just advertise for another job for you."

"Dat am too thin. Youse wanted to hab some fun wid me. But didn't I get outen ob it nice?" he asked, and then his grin was seen in its full effulgence.

"Yes, first rate, and now of course you cannot give away without making yourself out a liar and losing your job."

"Dat's so, chillun. All right," and he kept on hoeing.

And so that snap ended well.

Clem had a fit this afternoon, Mrs. Rorarity," said Jimmy, not long afterward.

"An' did he doie?" she asked, as though she would gladly have heard that he did.

Then they told her all about it, for they had learned to trust her, and she had a jolly good laugh over it, as did Peggy, who was present.

"Begorra, but yersloy dogs, so ye are. Who'd ever think it ter luk at yees?"

"Oh, that's all right. Uncle Peter tells us nearly every day to have all the fun we can."

"Then it must be all roight, for he's ther nicest man in New Jarsy."

Then she gave them each some nice cake.

Peggy couldn't keep it to herself, and told two or three of the hands at supper time, and by the time Clem got over his fit sufficiently to join his fellow laborers at the table they were ready to go for him.

"Hear yees had a fit ther day, Clem?" said Pat Malloy.

"Yes—I heard he had a fit," said another, and finally, after the whole tableful of good-natured laborers had said that they had heard more or less about Clem's having had a fit that afternoon, Pat asked:

"Fut sort av a fit was it, Clem?"

"Y—you folks make much fo' to say 'bout havin' a fit. S'pose I did hab one, what ob it?" he demanded, angrily.

"Nothing, only we wanted to know what sort of a fit it was. Lots of different kind, you know," said another.

"Oh, you fellers' only coddin' me. Dem boys make out big things out ob nuffin. Jus' got a little sun-ken, dat's all," said he.

"Where did the sun strike you, Clem?"

"To find out," he said, in a surly tone.

"An' yees won't tell us where ye was struck, eh?" said Pat Malone.

"I don't 'low folks to fool long with me."

"Is that so? What do ye do?"

"I've licked mo'n one man fo' it."

"Want to lick another?" asked Pat.

"I don't want no mo' you slack."

"Supper is over. Let's go out behind the barn. I'll back yees there."

Clem wasn't much of a fighter, except rough-and-umble, and he was not very anxious to accept the challenge.

But they all egged him on and Pat was a little spray of a man, so he finally followed the party to a place out of sight.

The moon was shining brightly, and after working them up the same as they would a reluctant bull, he finally faced his little tantalizing antagonist with a resolution in his heart to send him to the doctor's care. And so he might if he had had it all his own way, but Pat was a skillful boxer and proceeded to thump him where he liked, and at the same time did not get hit once himself.

Clem was awfully mad, but that was all the good it did him. His big nose was getting a bang nearly every minute, and Pat could have put in the blows oftener and harder than he did had he wanted to hurt him.

"Stop dat!" yelled Clem. "Why don't you stan' up like a man an' gib me a show?"

"Here's a show," said Pat, dropping his hands.

Clem made a wicked lunge for his head, but he got on his own instead.

This seemed to daze him.

"Want another show?" asked Pat.

"Go in, Clem," said the others.

"I am'n't used to dat yer boxin' fightin'," said he, shyly.

"Well, have you got enough?"

"Yes. It arn't my style noways. I can lick fo' men rough-and-tumble."

"Well, that shows the value of science. Now go up to ther house, an', moind ye, don't soy anything ter er boss about it," said Pat, as he and his fellow-laborers started off in another direction for a swim in a lake hard by.

"Say anything to de boss 'bout it! Well, I guess not," he muttered, as he walked toward the pump. "Dis yer has been a purty poo' day fo' me, an' all on account ob dem yer twin kids," he growled, as he washed his bleeding snoot at the snoot of the pump.

This done, he concluded that the best thing he could do was to go to bed, and close the eventful records of the day.

The twins had seen it all.

That night there was singing up in an arbor by the Frenchmen employed by Mr. Nettlebone among his grapes, and it sounded beautifully in the uncertain moonlight, and everybody about the place, even Mr. Nettlebone and his nephews, sat out in chairs on the green sward and listened.

It seemed like the fabled land of Arcadia, and no happier person was there than the owner of all the surroundings.

Timmy and Jimmy were so impressed with the melody that they held their breath, and, for the time being, forgot all thoughts of mischief.

But not a note, not a waft of that melody on the night air reached Clem Brown, or affected him if it did. He had wound his nose up in a rag and gone to sleep. He had had all he wanted out of that day and night, and so closed the account.

The next morning came bright and beautiful, and Mrs. Rorarity, all smiles, was ready for the men when they came to their breakfast.

A loud laugh greeted Clem when he showed up for hash, but he expected it and made no reply, his chief object being to get his breakfast eaten as soon as possible, and get into the field to work before the boss put in an appearance.

In this he was successful, but later in the forenoon Uncle Peter and his nephews sauntered around his way.

"Well, Clem, how are you getting on?" the old man asked kindly.

"All right, sah," he replied, at the same time keeping his face averted.

"Well, as soon as you have finished this you can take into the corn. Why, what is the matter with your nose, Clem? It looks like a big sun-burnt tomato," said he, laughing, which was also a signal for the boys to get in their cackle.

"A bumble-bee stung me dar, sah, and it am very so'."

"Well, I should think it would be. But that bumble-bee must have been in a hurry to leave his card, or he would never have left it there, for goodness knows that it was a big nose when healthy."

The old man didn't know he had made a pun, and so it must not stand against him.

"Come up to the office after you finish these potatoes, and I'll give you something that will make it all right."

The boys noticed that Clem's grin had gone, probably knocked out the night before, and if there was any particular expression on his mug at all, it was one of hatred as he glanced at them, knowing them to be the author of all the woes he had endured since coming to the place.

But during the next few days he saw but very little of them, for they were busy building a water-mill, they having studied mechanics and philosophy, carrying off high honors for boys of their age. And as they had also learned the use of tools at school, it remained to be seen what they would accomplish—Uncle Peter assisting them with his experience in mill-writing.

This kept them busy, and they almost forgot Clem Brown.

They found him working in the barn one day and wondered how they could have some fun with him, as he had evidently forgotten and forgiven everything of the past.

Later on an Italian organ-grinder came along the road, and after getting five cents for what he could play at the house, the twins, who knew their uncle was away, offered the fellow a quarter to come down to the barn and play.

Yum Bung seemed to like that idea, too, for he evidently wanted to dance, so he asked permission to go along.

"Certainly. Come on, Bung."

The Italian evidently thought he had struck it with some fat in it, and was not slow to follow to the barn.

"Here, Clem, can you dance?" asked Jimmy, as they entered.

"Ken I dance! Ken a duck swim?" he demanded.

"What yer got dar?"

"A hand organ."

"Me dancie allie same likie Melican man," said Yum Bung.

"You dance!" sneered Clem, looking at him with contempt. "Whar's de boss?"

"Gone to town."

"Cock shuah?"

"So be bloss glone," added Yum Bung.

"All right. Give us a breakdown, one ob dem real ole Souf Carlina ones dat we darks used to dance."

"But he can only play a jig. Now, what we want is for you and Yum Bung to dance a jig together, and we will decide which dances the best."

"All right. Set de ole music trap a-goin, I's ready for anything," said Clem, wiping the dirt from his boots.

The Italian set his organ and started the only jig he had in his cylinder, and at it the Chinaman and the negro went right there on the barn floor.

Clem's big boots made a terrible noise as he banged them down, raising the dust out of the cracks of the floor, while Yum Bung rattled the time with his wooden shoes most artistically.

It was a picture worth seeing, and several of the workmen did steal to the barn when they heard the music and the racket to get a sight at it.

Those quiet twins were never so much delighted in their lives: as they urged the grotesque dancers to jump in and show their style. Even the Italian made it just as lively as he could for them.

It was to continue ten minutes, but before that time fat Clem Brown was so nearly winded that he had to draw out, while the lithe Chinaman was all right, and now that he had it all his own way, gave the boys some fancy dancing that they had never seen before.

"Yum Bung wins," said Jimmy, as he motioned for the musician to stop.

"Well, dat's some mo' ob my luck; he amn't so fat as I am, an' dar's whar I lose de prize. Make it five minits, an' I dance dat shirt-washer outen his wooden shoes, fo' shuah."

But the boys knew they had carried the thing far enough, so they sent the Italian on about his business, twenty-five cents richer, and allowed the others to go back to their work.

The thing was very funny, however, while it lasted, and no one was more delighted than was Yum Bung. He nearly drove Mrs. Rorarity wild trying to tell her about it.

"Well, ter make a story that nobody can understand short, what did yees do?"

"Music man play hi, hi jiggy; me an' Clem dancie," said he, giving her a specimen of it on the kitchen floor.

"Oh, yees have been dancin'?"

"So be; me an' Clemie down in blarn. Me dancie him all bloke lup," said he, with evident glee.

"Well, ifther boss should catch ye at it he'd break ye all up," said she.

"Bloss gone town—hi! hi!" and he gave some more specimens of his jig dancing.

"Aisy there, ye almond-eyed haythin! I don't want no holes knocked in my floore. Who started it?"

"Bloys."

"Sure, an' I'll warrant me! Faith, I thought they were the most quiet lads I ever seen, but, begorra, I guess there's as much divilment into 'em as any other b'ys," said she, resuming her work.

Jimmy and Timmy enjoyed this racket very much, and they knew that so long as nothing serious had happened to Clem because of it that it would make them good friends again.

Finally they got their water-mill so it would work very nicely. It was not covered over, but stood like the pretty skeleton of a little saw-mill, with carriage and everything complete.

And instead of sawing wood—they having only a tin saw—they selected long cucumbers and placed them on the carriage, as a sawyer would place a log, and sliced them up in the most artistic manner.

Uncle Peter was delighted, and said they could have every long cucumber on the farm, and everybody on the place regarded it as a wonderful piece of work, and were eager to see it work. And this, of course, occupied much of their time, greatly to the relief of Clem Brown.

But Clem was not forgotten.

Those quiet twins were not apt to forget a really good thing.

But while they were at work planning a racket something happened that promised more or less fun.

A pole-cat had stolen into the chicken coop and carried off two or three nice chickens, much to the disgust of Mr. Nettlebone, to say nothing of the terrible smell it left behind.

"Clem, did you ever hunt skunks?" Mr. Nettlebone asked of him.

"Neber was much at skunkin', boss, but show me a coon or a possum an' I's perfectly at home," said he.

"But a coon is one of the hardest things in the world to hunt. I want you to take my gun and watch for that stinking thief to-night."

"All right, boss."

"Keep out of sight and watch for him to come, then blow him to pieces and bury him before morning," said the boss.

"Oh, I gets him fo' suah. I's lay low all night long fo' a coon."

"Well, you will find the gun up in the office, and I shall expect you to put that nuisance out of existence."

The gun was already loaded, and Clem was very proud to handle it, for it was a very handsome one.

He went to a clump of currant-bushes not more than a rod from the coop for a hiding-place. It was moonlight, and Clem watched for several hours, when suddenly everybody was aroused by the loud discharge of his gun.

#### CHAPTER IV.

FOLLOWING the startling report of the gun came fierce yells from some beast—certainly not a polecat—and howls for help from Clem Brown.

Mr. Nettlebone had not yet gone to bed, and he hastened to the assistance of his man, who seemed to be having a fight.

There was a lantern burning in the hall, and he took it along, wondering what had happened the skunk-hunter.

But Clem had conquered his enemy by the aid of his jack-knife, and what should it be but a small but very savage wild cat that he had wounded, mistaking it for the polecat, and it had instantly sprang upon him, fastening its sharp teeth and claws in his flesh.

"In the name of goodness, what are you doing here, Clem?" asked Mr. Nettlebone, holding up the lantern.

"I's been habin' a fight, sah," said he.

"Well, I should judge so—but not with that polecat, surely?"

"Boss, if you calls dat a polecat I don't want no



mo' to do wid 'em," said he, holding up the dead wild cat.

"Why, Clem, that's a wild cat."

"Well, I thought it wasn't very tame the way it went for me, tooth and nail."

"How did it come around here, I'd like to know?"

"After chicken, I guess."

"I didn't know there was one within twenty-five miles of here. But you have done even better than if you had killed the skunk, and as he is most likely frightened away for to-night, you may go to bed. Bring him up to the office so we can have a look at him in the morning."

Clem was glad enough to get to his room, where he could attend to his wounds, but he was feeling good, for all that, because he knew it would make a hero of him.

And he was right, for when the story of his adventure spread the next morning, and there was the ferocious animal and Mr. Nettlebone's word for it, he received all sorts of compliments and congratulations from his fellows.

This puffed him up until he could scarcely contain himself, and, to make him feel still more lofty, Mr. Nettlebone told him to skin the animal carefully, and he would have it stuffed as a memento.

Clem always took on a great many airs when he was set to do any special thing, and made himself believe that nobody else could do the job, and nearly all that day he lingered learnedly and lovingly over the preparation of that wild cat's hide for stuffing.

And Jimmy and Timmy watched him with considerable interest, putting all sorts of questions to him to draw out his learned burlesque answers, laughably scientific.

And he told them of his wonderful exploits in hunting 'possum and coon until he felt sure that he was a remarkable person in the eyes of the schoolboy twins.

In the meantime, those quiet twins had taken their box trap, which they had made to catch squirrels in, and getting a piece of raw meat from Mrs. Roriarity, had set it for that skunk in some shrubbery near the hen-coop.

"Going to lay for the skunk to-night, Clem?" asked Jimmy.

"Don't know. 'Pends on what de boss says. But I don't want to lay fo' no mo' ob dis kind, by golly," replied he.

"Will you skin him too if you get him?"

"Dat 'pends on de boss. I does just wha' he toles me, don't you see?"

"Of course. But if you had his skin nicely stuffed it would look well together, and be two proud marks for you."

"Dat am so. Yes, I skin him," said he, after a moment's reflection.

"Won't skin him before you get him, will you?" asked Jimmy.

Clem looked at him a moment in surprise, and finally tumbled with an enlarged grin.

"Guess I catch him fust. Ya, ya, ya!"

"But you must be careful and not shoot too many holes in him, or the stuffing won't stay in the skin."

And so they chaffed him until he had completed his job, all the while having in mind the little racket they were working.

"Well, Clem," said Mr. Nettlebone that evening, "are you going to set up for that polecat to-night?"

"Jus' as you say, boss," he replied.

"Well, I have loaded the gun again, and I guess you had better try it."

"All right. I go on watch 'bout nine o'clock, after de moon am up."

"Very well; kill him, if possible, for he and that wild cat have been playing sad havoc in my coops."

Thus it was arranged, and Clem went around and told everybody what he was going to do to astonish them.

"Faix, I hope yees may get him an' kape him for a pet," said Mrs. Roriarity.

"I's gwine to skin him an' hab him stuff like de wild cat."

"Yes, an' then go bury him," said Pat Malone.

And they chaffed him until he shouldered the gun and started for his watch again.

The twins watched him closely, for by the increase of perfume down by the hen-coop they concluded that the skunk had involuntarily taken up his quarters in their trap.

"Whew!" exclaimed Mr. Nettlebone, "the rascal is somewhere around."

"Whew!" exclaimed almost everybody.

"Who! how he do smell!" said Clem, as he made his way to his hiding-place. "Wha' a fool he am to gib himself away like dat. He might know somebody smell him out," and feeling certain that he should see him soon, he laid low in the currant bushes.

He smelled stronger and stronger, but still he didn't come in sight, and Clem watched and waited for an hour or more.

Finally the moon went behind a bank of clouds, and he concluded to give up the hunt for the night.

But the next day the smell was even more pungently offensive than ever, and Clem had to admit that he had been stunk out the night before without being able to bag his game.

This irritated Mr. Nettlebone, and he told Clem that the skunk must be hidden somewhere around the coop, and for him to take the stable-broom and beat the bushes all around, and kill him if he started him from his hiding-place.

Of course the twins were much interested in this, and watched Clem as he went for those bushes with the broom.

As for Mr. Nettlebone, he got out of the way as far as possible.

"Go for him, Clem!" cried the lads.

"Golly, how de do fame!" replied Clem, as he approached the box-trap.

"Drive him out!"

"Smash him!"

And Clem was doing his best to finish a disagreeable job as quickly as possible.

Seeing the the box-trap, and not knowing what it was, or caring, he gave it a whack with the heavy broom, knocking it over and open, when out ran the imprisoned skunk.

"Dar he am!" he cried, and made for him with the broom.

"Go for him, Clem!" shouted the boys.

And he did go for him, knocking him galley west with one blow, and then finishing him completely with others.

Clem was again a conqueror, but oh, what a conquest it was!

He was perfumed from head to foot, and seemed to possess all the aroma that the poor skunk had lost.

Even the boys could not stand it, and ran away with their noses in their thumbs and fingers.

"Carry him a spade and tell him to bury the creature," called Mr. Nettlebone to one of his men, and the order was at once but reluctantly obeyed.

Never was anything put under ground quicker than that skunk was, but the other man didn't stay to help. Clem had to do it alone, as he had done the killing.

But, after all, he had all the aroma with him.

"Don't come up here!" cried Mr. Nettlebone. "Go down to the barn, and I will send Yum Bung with a change of clothes. Whew!"

"Whew!" cried everybody, and poor Clem started sorrowfully for the barn, at the same time trying to think how that skunk got into that box.

Clem got out of his clothes as quickly as possible, and then Jimmy turned the hose on him, giving him such a washing off as he probably never received before.

"Easy dar, honey; I habn't got any in my mcuf an' eyes," said he, as the rogue gave him the full stream thereabouts.

But Jimmy was having too much fun to give it up on account of such a little thing.

"Close your cave if you don't want it flooded," said Timmy, laughing.

Presently Yum Bung came down with a dry suit of clothes—the one that mated the other—and Clem got out of the waterfall for the purpose of getting into them.

This did not take him long, and then he followed Mr. Nettlebone's instructions to bury the other suit to purify it.

"No kittycat, eh?" asked Yum Bung, grinning.

"Kittycat! Somebody's got fo' ter suffer fo' dis yer prank on me. I can stan' good deal, but dis yer am too much," said he, glaring savagely at the twins.

"What's the matter, Clem?" asked Timmy.

"Who's been playing pranks on you?" asked Jimmy, and at the same time Mr. Nettlebone appeared.

"Who catch dat skunk in de box-trap?"

"Why, he caught himself."

"Who trap war dat?"

"It is ours."

"Who set dat trap dar?"

"We did—to catch a weasel."

"Weasel! Weasel asleep, I guess. You set dat trap purpus fo' to catch dat skunk, so I get pizenen. I know you."

"How is that, boys?" asked Mr. Nettlebone.

"We didn't know skunks would go into box-traps, an' Mrs. Roriarity toles us that there were weasels around the coop, so we thought we'd try and catch one."

"And the abominable skunk got in instead," said Mr. Nettlebone, coming to the rescue of his clever nephews. "That is all right, Clem. They didn't intend to harm you."

"Wal, by golly, dar am somefin a-happenin' me eber since I come whar dey am, an' I hab my 'pinion 'bout dis yer skunk business. I should hab shot him las' night fo' shuah, if he hadn't been in dat box-trap a-stinkin'." Yes, I hab my 'pinion 'bout it," he added, going to his work in the field.

Mr. Nettlebone also walked to his office. There was a grin on his face that told that he was pretty nearly of the same opinion as Clem regarding the affair.

"Well, boys will be boys," was all he had to say and proceeded to business.

By this time the truth of the matter was known to everybody about the place, and Mrs. Roriarity could scarcely contain herself from laughing at the odd happenings.

Not long afterward the twins called on the housekeeper in the kitchen, hopeful, most likely, that she might have some goodies around somewhere.

"Worra, worra, it's a pair av bad eggs yees are in spoite av yer innocent looks," said she.

"Hi, hi, hi! Clemmy got stinkie!" came from the laundry, accompanied by a loud rattle of wooden shoes on the floor.

"Hush yer riot in there, yer bloomin' hathin, or I'll stand yer on yer head an' turn soap suds down yer baggy trousers, so I will," said Mrs. Roriarity, and instantly there was silence in the laundry.

"Why, what have we been doing?" asked both Jimmy and Timmy, innocently.

"Och, give me no more av yer Sunday-school looks, me foine lads. Yer as full av ther devil as an egg's full av mate."

The twins looked at each other in surprise.

"I cudn't for ther loife av me tell which wan it was that came ter me yesterday ter get a piece av meat ter set a trap."

"Well, any harm in that?"

"No, but yees knew yees war goin' ter catch that skunk away from Clem and that there would be some fun out av it."

"Well, fun's all right, isn't it?"

"Yes, but yer such slick wans."

"Oh, that's all right. Didn't I tell you there was lots of fun in Clem Brown?"

"Faith, yer'll be ther death av him yet."

"Oh, no. He rather enjoys it."

"An', begorra, I guess yer do yerselves."

"Of course we do. What did we come out here to spend our vacation for if not to have some fun? Uncle Peter says it is all right."

"Then I suppose that makes it so. Wud yees have a bite?"

"We wouldn't kick."

"Then here's a couple av pois as will kape yees quiet awhile," said she, giving them each one of their favorite turnovers.

Away they went up to their little mill, and the good housekeeper watched them with a smile on her florid face. And then she nodded her head significantly as she turned to resume her work.

"They're foine lads, an' I rather loike their bein' so quiet. It's different from other b'ys," and she plunged into the dough trough with a smile on her face that was good to look at.

And Yum Bung wore a grin at his work, thinking of the sly capers of the boys, and he wanted to dance to further express his feelings, but he dare not.

And good Uncle Peter wore a smile as he went about his work.

And those quiet twins smiled when alone by themselves, and talked over the comical happenings of the forenoon.

The laborers about the farm not only smiled, but yaped their feelings right out as they talked the adventures over, and even the Frenchmen at work in the vineyard got a general idea of it, and they, too, laughed.

But Clem Brown did not laugh. Even his natural grin looked sickly. He thought he understood the whole business, and he felt like hurting somebody.

And yet things soon quieted down again. The birds twittered, the bees sang their working-song amid the flowers, the brook danced with delight over cascades, and seemed to laugh as it turned the little mill of the handsome lads who watched it.

Even Clem forgot his anger after dinner, and later on his song was heard as he worked amid the waving corn.

"What is the matter with having some fun with Yum Bung?" asked Timmy, as they walked homeward at the close of the day.

"That's good enough. Let us give Clem a rest and get him good-natured again," replied Jimmy.

They had become great favorites with everybody on the place by this time, and there was most generally some entertainment for them at night in the rooms of the people employed by their uncle.

The next day they made themselves very friendly with Yum Bung, and their attention was extremely pleasing to him.

Mrs. Roriarity noticed them.

"Och, begorra, an' I guess it's the hathin's turn next," said she, "for those dainty blackguards wouldn't be afther giving up much toime-ter they loikes av him if they didn't have some objection in view."

But nobody would have suspected them of being up to any mischief, seeing them at their play, laughing, running, shouting and doing all those things that heart-free boys do.

They were evidently in no hurry with whatever they had undertaken, although they spent much of the time in the carpenters' shop, there being nobody else engaged there then.

But still Mrs. Roriarity felt certain that some was going to happen, and had Yum Bung been body that she had the slightest care or respect she would have put him on his guard, or at least him a hint.

The next day she noticed them out on the lawn where Yum Bung was hanging out his washing, but as she could hear nothing that was said, and could not judge at all by appearances, she finally abandoned her ideas and concluded that the boys were trying to learn Chinese.

"Did you ever see a ghost, Yum?" asked Jimmy after they had talked awhile.

"S'pec', yes, in China, heaps," he replied.

"Ghosts of dead men?"

"No, ghostie cat, doggie, snake, heap."

"No, such things don't have ghosts. Only humbeings have ghosts."

"Be so?" he asked, becoming a little interested.

"Certainly. Haven't you seen anything strange since you have been here?"

"Only Clemmy Brown," said he, grinning.

"No, no, anything supernatural? Something strange and horrible-looking about the place at dead night?"

"Me no."

"Well, we have."

"What be?"

"They say there was a man murdered here yea ago 'fore Uncle Peter bought the place, and that ghost comes to the place every month and cuts up ghosts of shiness."

"We saw it," put in Timmy.

"Be so?" asked Yum, who understood them well enough to get a pretty correct idea of the yarn, but able to understand English much better than he could speak it.

"Yes, but don't say a word about it, for it wouldn't like it. It would frighten everybody away."

"Me no flaid ghostie," said he, but he didn't look though he really meant it.

"We are. They kill you sometimes."

"Killie?"

"Yes, so I have heard. They come to you when you're asleep and steal your breath."

"Be so?"



"Yes. We heard of one that killed fifteen people once."

"Oh, well, that's all right. He won't hurt us, so be sure and don't say anything about it, will you?"

"Me no," said he, but there had already come into his looks a wild expression, so the boys adroitly changed the subject, and in a few minutes were laughing and chatting as merrily as ever.

But the poison had got under his skin, and after the boys had gone Mrs. Rorarity noticed that the Chinaman looked very sober.

His sleeping room was over the laundry, and he was the only one who slept in that wing of the building.

Gradually all the ghost stories he had ever heard came back to his memory, and before it was time to go to bed he had become very nervous at the possibility of seeing one of those things that really have no

But Mr. Nettlebone and several of his employees who had been aroused now rushed into the room with lights and demanded the meaning of the uproar.

Yum Bung was trembling like a leaf as he stood there with only one garment on and the smoking pistol in his hand, and for quite awhile could only ejaculate "ghostie."

"What?" demanded Mr. Nettlebone.

"Ghostie—heap big—shootie—bang!"

"Yum, you are either crazy or drunk."

"No drinkie. See ghostie, sure."

"I'll bet you have been at my last year's vintage," said the old man, severely.

"Me no; me hopie die. See ghostie at window, all fire, bobbie up a down, make a big noise—do so," and he went through with a performance to show what the ghost did.

lated to the boys Yum Bung's adventure of the night before.

It pleased and interested them greatly, and all three of them laughed heartily.

"Now, of course I don't believe he saw anything at all, but if he did it was only a joke played upon him by some of the men. You find out if you can, for I dare say there is lots of fun at the bottom of it."

"Yes, we will if we can," they both said.

"But Yum is very sore over it, and you will have to deal carefully with him."

"All right."

And the two honest-looking rogues went out upon the lawn for their regular morning game of "toss and catch."

Of course there was a deal of laughing and chaffing all over the place at poor Yum Bung's expense, and Mrs. Rorarity would give him no rest at all.



He was perfumed from head to foot, and seemed to possess all the aroma that the poor skunk had lost. Even the boys could not stand it, and ran away with their noses in their thumbs and fingers.

name in the Chinese language, although they have an idea about the return of spirits of the departed.

But on going to his room he made up his mind to be well on the defensive, and so fished out two big pistols and placed them under his pillow.

"Ghostie come foolie roun' me, me makie sick," he muttered as he turned in.

#### CHAPTER V.

It was midnight.

Yum Bung had about that time fallen into a nervous sleep, and in a short time would have forgotten everything.

But a noise at his chamber window startled him into wakefulness.

He rose up and seized his pistol.

There was no curtain to his window, and he saw a most hideous head, with flames all around it, looking savagely in at him.

His pig-tail stood on end like a cart-rung, and his teeth chattered like castanets.

The apparition bobbed up and down, then to the right, then to the left, and finally banged up against the window-pane.

This broke the spell that was upon him, and finding his tongue, he yelled murder in pure Chinese and frightfully broken English.

This only made the phantom dance and bob around all the more.

Cocking his pistol, he fired at it through the glass as many as five or six shots, all of which sounded like cannons and aroused everybody on the place.

The glass was all shattered, but when the smoke cleared away the ugly phantom had gone.

"Oh, what nonsense!"

"The fact is, he had a nightmare," said one of the men.

"Look at that window," said Nettlebone.

"Me flaid an' shootie."

"Well, I should say you did," and Mr. Nettlebone threw up the window and looked out.

Of course there was nothing unnatural to be seen, and he called the frightened Chinaman's attention to the fact.

He gazed tremblingly around out upon the lawn, but did not appear satisfied.

"Now you go to bed, and I will look into this business in the morning. I think you have been too deep in my last year's vintage, and if I find you have I shall make an example of you," said Mr. Nettlebone as he and the others marched out of the room, leaving poor Yum Bung standing there alone.

How he ever passed the night he never knew, but he slept but very little, although he had no more ghostly visitations.

He was up uncommonly early the next morning, but would have nothing to say to anybody. They bantered him about the ghost, but he would not even look at them. It was his ghost, if anybody's.

He did not meet Mr. Nettlebone until breakfast time, and then he said nothing. But, in the meantime, he had examined the locks of his wine vaults and found the seals were unbroken, and so came to the conclusion that Yum had not been stealing, and that his wild performance of the night before was due to some other cause than drunkenness.

The twins had nothing to say on the subject, but breakfast passed almost silently, after which, and when they were alone in his office, Mr. Nettlebone re-

lated to the boys Yum Bung's adventure of the night before.

He walked across the lawn where the boys were playing ball.

"Good-mawnin', chilluns."

"What's the matter with you, Clem?"

"By golly mighty, I b'lieve I'll bust!" said he, followed by a regular fog-horn laugh.

"Been swallowing some of your own gas?"

"Ya, ya, ya! But didn't you heah 'bout it?"

"What?" they both asked calmly.

"'Bout dat ghost dat nearly scare de life outen de Chinaman?"

"Of course we did."

"And we saw it ourselves," added Jimmy.

"What! In your mind, I guess."

"No, sir. We heard Yum banging away at something, and of course looked out to see what it was. There was a ghost and no mistake, for we saw him dive down the old dry well."

"Wha' you gibin' me?"

"Oh, believe it or not, jest as you like, but when Yum Bung fired at it it skipped and went head-first down the old well."

Clem didn't hardly know whether to believe them or not, knowing them to be such guyers, but they looked so honest, as they sent the red hot balls from one to another, that it actually began to rattle him a little.

"Oh, pshaw, dar am no such things as ghosts," he said, finally.

"If you saw one with your own eyes you would believe it, wouldn't you?"

"Well, maybe," he answered, looking serious.



"All right; we two and Yum Bung saw this one, and I guess that's good evidence."

"Jump down de ole well?" he asked, coming nearer to Jimmy.

"Yes, head-first."

"Say, Clem, I'll bet a quarter that you haven't the nerve to go and look in that well, even in the daytime," said Timmy, working up to the point.

"Oh, dat's all talk."

"All right, but you don't dare go all the same."

"I go if you do."

"Oh, dear, no. You go alone, and if you do it you get a quarter."

"You 'fraid?"

"Yes, we are."

This touched his pride. Didn't he have any more sand in him than a boy?

"By golly, I go, an' I bring you somefin' outen dat well to prove it," said he, resolutely.

"All right. Go ahead!" and he started. Surely, in there was such a thing as ghosts, they would not be fooling around in the daytime.

This old dry well was located a few yards back of the main wing of the house and had not been used in years, and naturally filled up with all sorts of rubbish, being covered with three loose planks.

The twins had it all arranged, and when Yum Bung began to fire at the ghost they had been to so much trouble to make, they skipped, chucked it down the well, and then got to their own room as quickly as possible.

Clem walked to the place with a swagger, but when he reached it he appeared a little shy to the boys who were watching him.

He walked around it several times and rolled his big eyes down the opening. There was nothing ghostly there, and he finally got up courage enough to throw off another plank.

Then, after waiting a minute or so for developments, he got down on his knees and took a look.

The only thing that struck him as a little queer was a long pole with something at the bottom end of it that resembled a target.

Feeling of it cautiously, he finally pulled it up out of the well, and there was the ghost, minus the phosphorus.

He threw it upon the ground, looked at it a minute, kicked it, and then called loudly for Yum Bung.

The mystery was solved, so far as he was concerned, and he laughed loud enough to satisfy a country circus clown.

"Oh, arn't that a healthy ghost? Only an ugly mug painted to look as horrible as possible. Ya, ya, ya, oh, ya, ya, ya!"

By this time Yum Bung and Mrs. Roriarity came upon the scene, but the boys kept out of the way.

"Dar am de Chinaman's ghost!" said he, picking it up and standing it on end.

It was only a barrel head, painted white, and then a horrible face put on in black, fastened to a pole about ten feet long. There was phosphorus on it, but of course it did not show in the daytime.

Yum Bung recognized it with surprise, but he said never a word and went back to his tubs again.

Mrs. Roriarity laughed almost as heartily as did Clem Brown, and said without any hesitation that it was the work of the twins.

Clem marched triumphantly out to find the boys and claim his quarter, all the while roaring and laughing that he had caught a ghost, and dozens came to see it.

Mr. Nettlebone also happened along after Clem had set the ghost up against the fence, and on hearing the story he laughed as loudly as any of them, and went off once to see Yum Bung.

He went through the kitchen laughing, and of course Mrs. Roriarity joined him, being on the ticklish edge herself.

He laughed as he approached Yum Bung. But the Chinaman did not laugh.

"Oh, belly funny," said he, bitterly—"belly funny. Everybody tee-hee like dam foolie!"

"Well, Yum, you must admit that it is something to laugh at. What did I tell you?"

"You say me steal wine—me drunk."

"Oh, I take that all back, my boy, but I thought at first that you were either drunk or crazy, going on the way you were."

"Them bloys belly smart. I get hunky dory by them!" said he, savagely.

"But you are not certain that it was them. There are other practical jokers on the place."

"They both debels!"

"Oh, no. If they do anything it is only the ebullition of overcharged boyhood."

"Lookie so sweet an' slickie—all the time full funny like meat full egg."

"Oh, you are too hard on them. It may be that Pat Malone or Clem Brown did it."

"Sure an' it was the nagger that was after knowin' where to foind the ghost in the ould well," said Mrs. Roriarity, chipping in for the boys, because she thought it would please the boss, although, at the same time, she hadn't the slightest doubt but that they did it.

But they were such secretive fellows that it was next to impossible to get to the windward of them. They knew they could trust each other, and never trusted anybody else. The two were one.

"Yes, that is so, Yum, and you must not be down on the lads too severely."

"Faith, it was only a joke, onyway," said Mrs. Roriarity, chipping in again.

"Me no like jokie. All cussie nonsense. Everybody tee-hee—no goodie!"

"Oh, well, you ought to know by this time that Americans are natural jokers, and when you are in this country you ought to laugh them off like others."

"Me sklarae Chinman. Me washie all timeie. Jokie no goodie," replied he, sullenly.

"Faith, ther hathin has no more fun in his nature than a sick goose," said the housekeeper.

"I guess that's so."

"Who's going to mend the windy?"

"Yum, you will have to go down to the village and bring the glazier up here to repair the damage done your window."

Yum made no reply. He did not even look up, for he was mad clear through.

It is safe to say that everybody about the farm and vineyard wore a good-natured smile that day, with the solitary exception, of course, of the victim, Yum Bung.

The boys kept out of the way, passing their time either at their little mill or at their traps and snares. Clem Brown worked away with his mouth stretched from ear, and now and then he would fire himself off with a big laugh that made the mule he was ploughing with look around to see what the matter was.

Supper time came at last, and after that the help about the place gathered in front of the target-like ghost, and renewed their merriment, although the boys whom they all wanted to see kept out of sight in Uncle Peter's dining-room. They knew there was more to come when it became dark.

And so there was. The phosphorus that had not shone since it nearly frightened the life out of Yum Bung now began to flicker and play about the grotesque head, making it look much more like a demon.

This provoked both laughter and wonderment.

They tried to get Yum Bung out to see it in its perfection, but he would not come. They did not wonder, however, that it frightened him.

But Yum stole a look at it and saw that it was in reality the strange thing that bothered him so, and, having finished his work, he went to his room, and there loaded all the chambers of his two revolvers, and then stole out and got within range of the object, when he opened fire upon it, going closer at every shot.

This produced a scattering, for they didn't know which way he might finally fire. But every bullet seemed to take effect, for before both pistols were emptied the head was shot all to pieces, after which he turned and went to the house without saying a word.

He had had his revenge, and didn't care a snap what happened after.

It was a queer performance, but Mr. Nettlebone told them that it was decidedly Chinese, for he had often seen them in California shooting the bad spirits out of existence, and Yum evidently regarded this as his, not being able to see the joke in the matter.

It was as good as a circus to Clem Brown, and his loud laugh and voice could be heard above everything else. The boys made their appearance about this time and were heartily received by the hands who had gathered to see the fun.

"By golly, what should we uns do for fun," asked Clem, just as though he had never been a victim, "if it wasn't for de boys?"

"What have the boys got to do with it, Clem?" asked Jimmy.

"Oh, dat's all right, Timmy," replied Clem, with a knowing leer.

"Who are you calling Timmy?" asked Jimmy.

"Well, den, say you're Jimmy."

"But suppose I am not Jimmy?"

"Well, den you mus' be Timmy."

"Oh," they both said, and all hands had a parting laugh, and scattered about over the place to enjoy themselves until bed-time.

Not long afterward those who were enjoying the cool of the evening were charmed by a duo of boy voices, sounding almost entirely like one, so carefully had they been trained and so much alike naturally.

A nightingale's song could not have been purer than theirs was as they sang:

"Climbing up the golden stairs."

Uncle Peter was seated at the open window of his office, in grape culture meditation, you may depend, and was charmed from every other thought by the flute-like voices of his beloved but mischievous nephews.

"God bless them! What voices they have. They have been trained for Trinity, I believe, but what will the rector do with them, or, rather, what will they do with the rector? But they can do anything they want to here, that is settled," mused the good old man, as he listened, half-entranced, to the boy nightingales, trilling upon the evening air:

"Climbing up the golden stairs."

Ripples of applause followed from the different localities where the men were resting, and even the Frenchmen were uncommonly generous with theirs, shouting "encore" loudly.

Even Uncle Peter spanked his big hands together and called for a repetition.

"I've got an Arcadia here, and they are the brightest spirits in it."

"Climbin' up dem golden star," came out of the darkness somewhere, and the deep voice of Clem Brown also called for more.

"By golly, I's been to fust-class revival meetins, white, colored, an' mixed, but I neber hear anything like dat," he was heard to say, evidently to himself.

"Will yees hould yer gab?" cried Pat Malone, indignant at his having a say at such a time.

Then those flute-like voices rang out again upon the silent evening air, and the melody sounded even better than at first.

"Climbin' up dem golden stars," sang Clem, after the effect of the others had died away.

It wasn't exactly singing, but sort of a musical roar, that produced a laugh.

"I guess you'll go down the iron cellar stairs, Clem," somebody shouted for another laugh.

Then the French vine-growers, not to be outdone, sang a pretty French vineyard song that had a very musical chorus and was applauded.

Then all was quiet for a few minutes, with the exception of Clem Brown, who was growling in an undertone because somebody didn't ask him to sing, feeling certain that he could astonish them in some negro melodies, as he had often been called the boss camp-meeting roarer.

But he was slighted.

Then the boys sang "Angels ever bright and fair," with beautiful effect, and it was evident to every one with any knowledge of music that their voices had been trained for a choir.

Yum Bung and Mrs. Roriarity were seated near the kitchen door listening like the others, and the housekeeper was especially charmed.

"Be the piper that played before Moses, but them b'ys break me all up, so they do. They sing loike angels, an' do mischief loike devils," said she.

"Heap devil—no angie," growled Yum Bung, getting up and going to his room.

"Och, stop yer kickin', an' be dacent. But ther b'ys 'll get poi all the same."

Just then Clem Brown came up to where she was sitting. He felt slighted still.

"Did yees iver hear such singin' as that?" she asked of him.

"Berry good, but I sings some myself," said he, confidently.

"You!" she exclaimed.

"Used to be called de boss camp-meetin' singer down South."

"Howiy mother!"

"Oh, you can't tell by de look ob a cat how far he jump!"

A bright idea struck the housekeeper, and she asked him to give her a specimen, and he began:

"Oh, de debel thought dat I was dead,

A waitin' on de Lord.

He—"

Yes, he got so far, when there arose an indignant shout from all directions.

"Shoot him! Kill him!" and then all sorts of missiles began to fall around him.

Mrs. Roriarity skipped.

Faster and faster the missiles came, until he also made a break for cover, mad as a wounded coon.

## CHAPTER VI.

THE laborers on Peter Nettlebone's place retired soon after, but Clem Brown went to his little room red hot with indignation.

He had not only been slighted in not being asked to sing, but when he attempted it, at Mrs. Roriarity's mischievous suggestion, he was hooted and pelted with all sorts of things that drove him to roost.

"Guess they think I's a slouch, but I show 'em some day. Course I can't yop fancy like dem boys an' dem Frenchmen, but if they only gib me a chance I show 'em dat I got mo' voice than all of 'em put togedder. But dat's allus de way when a man isn't dressed well," he added, unbuttoning his short suspenders and undressing himself by the force of gravitation, with the exception of his big shoes, which required a derrick.

Mrs. Roriarity laughed herself to sleep, as did nearly everybody else on the place.

She had worked her first snap on Clem Brown, and was more ready than ever to agree with the twins—"That there was lots of fun in him."

The rising-bell the next morning found everybody ready for the new day, and half an hour afterward breakfast was ready for them, for Mrs. Roriarity always had it prepared over night.

The laborers' table was the first one to be served by pretty Peggy, and Clem was the first one to appear with his big mouth, but which, however, was only proportioned to his appetite.

"Good-mawning, Miss Peggy. You are looking charming dis mawning," said he.

"You don't say so," said she, pertly.

"Fo' de Lord I does, Miss Peggy."

"Well, I don't want any of your big-mouthed compliments, Mr. Brown. It won't bring you any more hash or coffee," and she went out of the room as the others came in.

"She's a mighty chippery piece; I'd like to make awful hot lub to her," mused Clem.

"Hello, Clem. How's that illigant voice av yours ther mornin'?" asked Pat Malone.

"Dat's all right."

"Yes, for yelling cabbages or clams," said Mr. Joy.

"Sure he'd frighten ev'ry customer away."

"Oh, now I wouldn't wonder if Clem had a good, strong voice," said another.

"Yes, an' a good, strong breath, be jabers," said Pat, producing a laugh.

"I think it would make a good fog-horn," said Mr. Bailly, and another laugh.

"Oh, dat's all berry well, but you cnes wouldn't give me a show."

"Show! Why, didn't you receive a lot of bouquets?" asked Mr. Joy.

"Yes, got frightened and skipped out."

"Dat's de way you treats a man if he don't dress well, an'—"

"There, see if that quart of hash and loaf of bread will fill your big mouth," said Peggy, placing his breakfast before him.

"Is it only a quart? Sure, ther poor man will be hungry before noon," said Pat.

But all their chaffing had no effect on him now. That savory hash and coffee filled his wide nostrils.



and he just paid his only attention to getting on the outside of them right speedily.

He left the table to attend to the mule who was to be his companion during the day, and, strange as it may seem, those twins had been there before him, and had been experimenting with that mule to see how much it took to make him raise his hind quarters angrily.

They finally satisfied themselves and went away, leaving the animal in anything but a pleasant frame of mind.

Clem came in feeling first rate, as he always did when he had his paunch full, and while digging out the meat with his little finger that had lodged between his teeth he slowly approached the business end of that angry mule.

He kicked him about a rod.

"Whoa, dar, whoa!" cried Clem, as soon as he had recovered wind enough. "Wha' de matter wid you dis maw'nin'? Didn't you get you breakfast? Oh, Lord, you hab' nearly knocked mine outen me. Whoa, boy, whoa."

But it was some time before he could soothe the beast enough to get into his stall and lead him out.

If that knock down blow had struck him in almost any other place than it did it would probably have knocked him out. But as it was he was only limping badly, and looking exceedingly sorry when he walked his companion out and met the boys, who seemed to be there for the first time.

"Hello, Clem, what makes you limp?"

"Dis yer animle's cranky dis maw'nin' 'bout somethin', and he frow his hoofs at me turruble hard."

"Why, I thought mules never kicked colored folks," said Timmy.

"Well, as a general thing they don't, unless dey's powerful mad 'bout sumfin. I reckon as how he's breakfast don't set well. But he really knocked mine outen me."

The boys followed him to the field.

"Nice singing we had last night?"

"Yes, only they wouldn't give me a show."

"That was dead wrong, and Jimmy and I are going to talk with the men and fix it so you shall have a show."

"Dat's good ob you, honey. I can sing," he added, earnestly.

"Certainly. Haven't we heard you?"

"But you neber heard me put in my big plantation Hicks."

"Now we'll fix it."

"An' you see if I don't make 'em sick."

"All right," and as he harnessed the mule to the plow and drove away the boys also walked back to the house.

"Yes, I guess he will make them sick. But how shall we work it?"

"We'll have to think it over. Ah! there is good Uncle Peter, looking as fresh as a rose this morning. Good-morning, uncle."

"Good-morning, boys. Glad to see you out so bright and early. Nothing like it to give you health and strength."

"We have been looking at your Sonora grapes. They are beautiful."

"Yes, the best in this part of the country, and, what is more, they will be ripe before you return, and you shall have a feast such as you never dreamed of," said he, with enthusiasm.

Clem was a delighted mule.

The twins were going to back him and he had nothing to fear. So while guiding the plow he sang over the pieces that he proposed to show off on, greatly to the discomfort and unhappiness of the mule, who would every now and then throw up his heels viciously, while the expression on his long face said he wished he was within reaching distance.

In the meantime the twins had gone around quietly among the laborers and told them what they proposed to do. The boys were to seemingly superintend and champion Clem, and the others were to keep quiet up to a certain point, when they were to get in their stage business.

They arranged it so that the concert was to commence at nine o'clock—and finished very soon afterward.

But through it all the boys were to appear his earnest but powerless friends.

The snap suited the men first-rate, and they sort of rehearsed their part as they were at their work.

Pat Malone was especially delighted.

Everybody treated Clem very nicely at supper time. They even talked aside among themselves on the prospect of having some genuine plantation music and dancing.

He thought what a big thing it was to have the boys for friends and felt very happy.

They took him down near the barn to show him the scene of his future triumph.

"You see, Uncle Peter don't want the noise of dancing so near the house, so we got that old barn door for you to stand on."

"Dat's all right, honey, I's danced on a barn doo' many a time. When shall I begin?"

"At nine o'clock."

"Be many heah?"

"All, I guess. You sort of lay around where we can know where you are, and at the proper time I will call you and announce you to the company in a little speech," said Jimmy.

"Oh, you's so kind, honey."

"But you must do your best at first, so as to make a good impression."

"Wha' would you try fus'?"

"Say 'Pretty Little Ida,' with all the breaks and the final dance," suggested Timmy.

"All right. I's done it often."

And so they separated to wait for nine o'clock, when it would be dark.

Clem never thought about the object in having it dark for the performance. But he noticed that there was considerable interest being manifested by those who had been his enemies the night before.

So he went down to the barn to practice.

When everything was in readiness Jimmy called loudly for Clem to show up, and right away a dusky form came slowly into view.

"Gentlemen, allow me to introduce to you Mr. Clem Brown, the sweet singer of the North Carolina swamps; the great impersonator of plantation life and melody; the great light hidden under a hogshead will give us a few specimens of his great ability, so please come to order."

There was a hush came over the company, although it was so dark that one could not see who composed that company.

Jimmy conducted Clem to the barn door.

Then he returned to where Timmy stood.

"Are you all ready?"

"Yes."

"Well, let her go."

Then Clem resolved to make the effort of his life to achieve renown. He began on that sweet little song and dance ditty:

"Oh, how I love my Ada, (Break)

Charming little Ada, sweet little Ada—

Oh, how I love my Ada, (Break)

I'll meet her when the sun goes down."

Then he began a fancy break-down in those big shoes of his which made the old barn door creek and crack as though he was crushing it into kindling wood.

Finishing the dance, he was about to begin on another verse, when four of the most stalwart of the spectators made a rush for him.

They caught him by the neck and the slack of his overalls and rushed him down to the goose pond, a rod or two below, into which they chucked him without word or ceremony, although the twins followed and loudly protested against the treatment, all of which was understood, of course.

"Shame—shame!" they cried, and made wild endeavors to assist him out, while the other conspirators walked away laughing.

"This way, Clem!" cried Jimmy.

"Here you are," said Timmy.

"Don't leave your hat."

Meanwhile Clem, who had gone all under, although the pond was not more than four feet deep in the middle, came to the surface and began to squirt dirty water out of himself.

He puffed like a grampus, but finally finding bottom, he began to wade ashore.

"It's a shame!"

"It's a regular outrage. I will tell Uncle Peter."

"And have those fellows discharged."

"No, no, don't hab 'em discharged," said he, as they assisted him up the bank. "Only luf me at 'em fo' 'bout five minutes, an' dey'll neber do any mo' work, anyhow. I send each one ob 'em to hospital fo' life."

"It would serve 'em right."

"Who were they, anyhow?"

"It was so dark we couldn't see, but we will find out, Clem, and let you give them what they deserve."

"You bet I fix 'em," he muttered, as he pulled off his baggy clothes to wring the water out of them.

"Too bad, too bad. But we'll stick to you, Clem, old man. It's a cold day when we go back on a man we agree to stick to," said Jimmy, as the two left him and walked toward the house.

"Crushed again!"

That might be well applied to poor Clem Brown now.

He wrung the water out of his shirt and overalls, everything he wore but his old white hat, and, hanging them on the fence to dry, wandered around in a state of nudity there in the darkness like a lost spirit.

Meantime, the conspirators were laughing themselves crazy over the snap, the credit of it all being given, of course, to those quiet twins. Indeed, the men about the place began to understand just about how quiet they were.

An hour afterward he got into his still damp clothes and started for his room.

Not a soul did he see nor a sound did he hear on his way. It was like a dream.

Now this was another part of the snap that the boys had arranged with the men.

They were not to say a word to him about it, or anything in his hearing, but to act in all respects as though such a thing never happened.

So the next morning, when he came to breakfast, looking very ugly, he found them talking on all sorts of subjects without ever mentioning the occurrence of the night before.

Indeed, they scarcely noticed him at all.

This puzzled him greatly, and he went to his work all broken up.

Why didn't somebody laugh at him?

They were generally ready enough to laugh at his expense.

Later on Mr. Nettlebone met his handsome nephews at breakfast.

"What was going on down by the goose pond last night?" he asked.

"The men were having some fun with Clem."

"And the boys joined in, I presume?"

"We couldn't help it, sir."

"What did they do?" he asked, and Jimmy proceeded to tell him all about it, and it tickled the old man greatly.

"Oh, it was great sport!"

"Yes, no doubt. I should think that he would take

a tumble after awhile, and conclude that his musical abilities were not appreciated here."

"One would think so."

"I will just put a flea in his ear."

He said to him later on:

"Clem, I don't want you to make a fool of yourself around my place. If you don't know by this time that you cannot sing for sour apples, and that you are unpopular just because you put yourself forward and do not keep your place, it is time you did."

"But de boys said it war all right."

"Of course. Everything is all right that promises fun for them. But I want you to keep your proper place, or I shall get somebody else that will," said he, walking away.

"Crushed again!"

"All right, dat settles it. I bet they go hungry fo' singin' belo' I gib 'em any mo'. Dat settles it. I gib dem fellows de dead cold shake," he muttered to himself.

It took just that to cure him, for afterward he seemed to understand that he was only a mule, and that it would not do for him to force himself forward out of place, and so it was really the making of him.

A week passed very quietly, during which time Mr. and Mrs. Bing, the parents of the twins, paid their brother and sons a visit.

Of course Peter Nettlebone was proud enough to show them over his place, more especially his acres of trellised grape-vines.

He had more varieties than they had ever heard of, but the most of them were not far enough advanced to give an idea of how they would eventually look.

Meantime the boys were very busy in getting up a game pie for their parents. Mrs. Rorarity was in with them, and they managed to snare a rabbit and catch three gray squirrels in their traps, and she attended to all the rest.

But the uppermost thing in Mrs. Bing's mind was how her dear boys were progressing in her brother's estimation, for she thought what a splendid place this would be for them to come into possession of should anything happen to dear Peter.

"And do you like them, brother Peter?" she asked, after he had shown them their mill and told them of various things, together with the great ambition of the day, that pie.

"Like them! like them! I never saw two such lads in my life! I never loved anything as I love them! They are the life and sunshine of the place! Everybody loves them, and there never was so much sly deviltry going on anywhere as they have introduced since they came here," said the old man, while happiness illuminated his cheery face.

The father laughed heartily, for it was just what he expected to hear, but the mother seemed a trifle serious. Nevertheless, so long as it did not offend her brother, she had but little to say.

That game was secured, and between Yum Bung and Mrs. Rorarity a splendid dinner was prepared in honor of the occasion, the game pie occupying the place of honor on the table, of course.

The boys had some sweet wine, but for the grown people Peter Nettlebone produced some of his choicest vintages, and they lingered lovingly over them.

But the twins came in for a large amount of praise because of their efforts, so ably seconded by Mrs. Rorarity, in making the dinner attractive as well as tasteful.

After all was over they took their mother over the place and showed her many things that her brother knew nothing of.

Meantime, Mr. Bing and his brother-in-law went out into an arbor to enjoy some fine cigars, and there it was that Peter laughed himself and kept his company laughing relating the pranks those boys had cut up.

The skunk trick.

The mysterious disappearance of Clem's old clothes. The ghost trick played on Yum Bung, and, finally, the racket with Clem in the goose pond, kept them both laughing for a long time.

Indeed, Mr. Bing grew rather proud of his boys and remembered when, single-handed, he was very much like them.

Later on they made up a pleasant party for a ride to the station, where the fond parents were going to take a train for New York.

And so the day passed most delightfully, the boys being too busy with honest work to think of any mischief.

They had been spending the evening in Uncle Peter's favorite arbor, talking over things, he telling them all about the wonders of California, when they finally concluded to retire.

"One song before you go, boys," said he.

"Oh, we are sleepy," protested Timmy.

"Just one verse."

And as they walked away they sang:

"Farewell, good-night - good-night,  
We'll meet at breakfast in the morning."

"Good! So we will. Good-night—good-night," said the old man, earnestly.

"I don't think much ob dat," said Clem, who was leaning out of his window.

## CHAPTER VII.

GOOD old Mr. Peter Nettlebone was right when he said his nephews were the life and sunshine of his home, and the very quiet way they had made their mischief all the more interesting.

Indeed, several had already begun to think what life would be there after they had gone, and the thoughts brought up regrets.

"An' how was ther game poie?" asked Mrs. Rorarity, as the boys came in the next day.

"Great! Ma says you are a splendid cook."

"Best she ever saw. Oh, that was just a red-hot old



game dinner, and don't let people go round talking the other way. What!" he suddenly exclaimed to his brother.

"Hey!" replied Jimmy, and before that astonished housekeeper had any idea of what was going on they were indulging in as lively a breakdown as she had ever seen in her life.

She started back in wonderment, and that soon changed to admiration.

"Well, ther howly mother be praised for this! I didn't think ther loikes av a dance was in yees," said she.

"Oh, how I love my Ada,  
Pretty little Ada, charming little Ada,  
Oh, how I love my Ada, [Break.  
I'll meet her when the sun goes down."

And then followed a neat bit of fancy dancing, so

But, speaking of Clem, the old saying that Heaven tempers the wind to the shorn was well exemplified in his case.

Friends had gone back on him, and he was alone in the world, seemingly, when about that time an old colored tramp came along with a half-grown yellow dog that he wanted to sell for a quarter.

Now if there is anything in the world that a darky likes it is a yellow dog, especially a diagonal yellow dog.

What is a diagonal yellow dog?

Didn't you ever see a yellow cur whose hind legs always seemed to be getting ahead, or trying to do so, of the animal's fore-quarters?

They are very common in the city, and they have a way of looking behind them as they trot that indicates that they expect a brick or something to follow them, and this is probably why they keep their hind-quar-

The boys sat down on the grass and watched the matter with interest.

"What good is a coon dog here?"

"I's gwine ter take him South. He am a berry fine specimen, an' maybe I sell him fo' big money after I break him."

"How much did you give?"

"A quarter to a tramp."

"Well, the way he looks now, you gave all he was worth."

"But wait 'til he get dry. He look better."

"What's his name?"

"Sasafrass. Sass fo' short."

The boys laughed heartily.

"Well, that is a sweet-scented name, and ought to bring him good luck."

They walked away, laughing at Clem's new freak, and the fancy name he gave to it. Jimmy said he



He gave the tramp a quarter for the dog, including a piece of string five feet long. "What's his name?" "Dunno" replied the tramp. "How long you owned him?" "Bout foar miles."

graceful, so gentle that it broke Mrs. Roriarity all up.

"That bates ther divil," said she.

"But it don't beat Clem Brown, though, does it?"

"Och! but what divilment yees have in yees, ter be afther gettin' him ter do that beautiful, graceful thing."

"Well, isn't Clem a beautiful thing?"

"Och! be out av this. Yer merriment kapes me from me work. Here's a pair of poies I saved for yees. Now, go an' sa' Yum Bung," said she, giving them the pies.

"Away wid yees! Shoo!" she said, merrily.

"Sure, how decaying them boys be. When they first came here they didn't seem half so big, they were so quiet and retired, but now that we come to know them they look loike strappin', well-built lads av at least fourteen," she mused at her work.

Yum Bung had overheard and seen the little song and dance, and he welcomed them to his quarters cheerfully.

"Hello, Yum!"

"Belly nice dancie. Heap big thing on stage, so be. Plenty money, hey?" said he.

"Oh, we don't want money; we want fun," said they, munching their pie.

"Belly funny," he said, after grinning over his ironing for awhile.

"Shoot it off and let's see if it is."

"Belly funny Clem dancie samie thing on ole barn door," and all three of them laughed heartily.

"Belly funny when chuckle in gloose plond."

"Yes, that was funny, very, very runny, for every body but Clem."

ters as well advanced as possible, for fear of these followers.

And so they are called by some the diagonal yellow dog; by others the biased yellow cur.

At all events, he is the dog nearest the average darky's heart, and as Clem was lonesome, he gave the tramp a quarter for the dog, including a piece of string five feet long.

"What's his name?"

"Dunno," replied the tramp.

"How long you owned him?"

"Bout foar miles."

"Oh, found him fo' miles back?"

"Dat's 'bout it," replied the tramp, walking away.

"All right, I'll name him."

The dog looked after its late master, and made three or four attempts to get away, but Clem said such nice things to him that he gradually became reconciled.

"Oh, I's got such a bully name fo' you," said he, and the dog looked up; "I's gwine ter call you Sasafrass, and he began to rub and pat the cur, and to impress it upon his mind what his name was.

After he got through work he took Sasafrass down to the goose-pond and gave him a wash. Something that probably never happened to him before in his young life.

Then he went in and got his supper, keeping a portion of it for his dog that he had left tied behind the hedge.

Jimmy and Timmy tumbled to the snap, and got on to it while Clem was sharing his supper.

"Hello, Clem, what you got there?"

"Boys, I bought a valuable coon dog, or he's only a pup now, an' gave him a wash and now his supper."

thought Clem had an idea of working the dog into fancy soap, and believed that the scent of the name would still cling to the remains and then save the expense of buying essence.

Well, after Clem had fed his dog he took him for a walk, so he might dry off, but so very proud was he of his new bit of personal property that he held his head well up as he walked along and took no notice of their questions and chaffing.

Finally he took him up into his room, gave him the soft side of his old valise to lay on, and the two went into the land of dreams together good friends.

He tied him outside when he went in to breakfast, quietly assuring him that he would bring him some if he was a good dog.

But somebody tied that yellow dog loose, and getting a sniff of the good things, he made his way into the eating-room.

He was discovered at once.

"Get out!" was the general shout.

But, instead of getting out, he got under the table, out of danger, as he thought, but in an instant a dozen heavy boots were trying to reach him.

"Here, Sass, come here," said Clem, but the dog had found quarters too warm for him, and making a dive for life, he darted out of the door, followed by a potato.

That, however, was a fish in his net, for he turned, seized it, and vanished.

"You uns mighty smart, 'busing a poo' dog, aren't you?" he said, indignantly.

"Roight ye are, Clem. He is a poor dog, and you want to keep him out of our eating-room," said Pat Malone.



"I tie him outside, an' I bet dem boys cut him loose, thinking he would run away."

"If they thought so they made a mistake, for that dog will never leave a locality where there is a smell of anything to eat," said Mr. Joy.

Hurrying through with his breakfast, he took a portion of his meat and started out in search of his diagonal runaway.

He whistled to all points of the compass.

"Heah, Sasafrass—heah Sassy!" he called, but the dog with the fragrant name did not present himself.

So he started toward the barn, still calling and whistling, when finally the cur sneaked timidly out of a hedge.

Clem gave him his meat, and explained to him that the thing should never occur again, after which he led him down into the field and tied him in a shady spot.

it would have brought a large sum could it have been sold for cat meat.

Well, true enough, Sasafrass was not the most obedient or grateful of dogs. But there were excuses for him. He was young, and of course naturally objected to being tied up all day long, and the idea probably struck him that the boys would be delighted with his company.

So when his master got out of sight he burst his fetters and started after them.

They had considerably the start of him, but half a mile away or so he overtook them, the most delighted dog in the world.

"Great Moses! look here, Timmy."

"Well, I'll be hanged! Get out, you horrible creature!" and he made a motion as if to throw something at him.

But this only made him retire a few yards and plant

He petted him, and soon had his whole confidence, although he looked around occasionally, as if in search of Tim.

Tim soon returned with a rousing big bull-thistle—in bloom, and with thorns on it an inch long.

The dog sprang for him, and he gave the thistle to Jimmy, who at once proceeded to tie the string tightly around the stump of it.

"Now back that yellow canine up here," said he, and then he tied the other end tightly to the cur's tail, close up to the body, leaving only about six inches between the two tyings.

Sasafrass didn't exactly understand this business; besides, the string hurt him, and he whined a little.

"Now git, you onry cuss!" said Jimmy, giving him a push.

But this he didn't seem inclined to do after the treat-



The old man began to work through his woolly head. After working it for about five minutes, he stopped and looked at him without saying a word. "Well, you are about the biggest fool nigger I ever saw."

Later on the boys called on Clem and his dog. They went into raptures over him, assuring him that he was a very valuable canine—one of the breed taking first prize at the great Bench Show, all of which made Clem feel very good.

At the same time they would not be seen with the cur following them.

But Sasafrass took a genuine fancy for the boys, manifesting it in all sorts of canine ways, and when they went away he tried his best to follow them, greatly to the disgust of his owner.

"Lay down, dar! Wha' de matter wid you? Who gib a quarter fo' you? Who fill you wid good grub an' care fo' you? An' now you wants to go wid strangers. Lay down."

Sass turned around once or twice and lay down. Clem thought his admonition had taken effect.

"Eberything 'pears to lub dem boys," he mutterd as he continued hoeing his row toward the bottom of the field.

Half an hour later he returned by the next row.

He looked for that dog, that canine of his affection. He was not visible. A thorough search, a series of loud calls, and any quantity of good whistles failed to bring him to view.

"He broke he string an' done gone foller dem boys. I hope they stone him," said he, going to the fence and looking up and down the street. "If I eber see don onry cur again, I kick outen ob him all eber I put in," he finally said, returning to his work.

Clem was crushed again, but this time it involved his affections and a good quarter of a dollar.

Gone was the grin that was usually such a noticeable feature of his face, and his heart was so heavy that

himself on his haunches and look at them as much as to say "Don't you know me?"

"Oh, you won't go, eh?"

"He must go or die, for if he follows us and finds out where our snares are he will be a worse nuisance than ever."

So they gathered a lot of stones and began to pelt him with them, causing him to yip and strike out of that on the fleet diagonal, finally disappearing a dozen rods away.

"There, I guess that will convince him that he isn't wanted," said Jimmy.

"Confound him, anyhow. Clem is all the while doing some such outrageous thing. But if this don't cure him we'll find something that surely will do so, eh?"

"You bet," and they continued on to visit their rabbit snares.

But they had not gone many rods when a noise in the bushes attracted their attention, and on looking around they saw that cur sneaking along after them.

"I say, Tim, if you have got a piece of string I have got an idea."

Timmy went through his pockets and found a piece of fish line.

"Bully! Now while I am making up with Sasafrass you find a big bull-thistle and bring about a foot of the top of it, and I'll show you a funny snap."

"All right," and he started.

"Here—come here, poor doggie. Did they abuse you?" he said, calling him.

The purp had some suspicions yet, but a few cajoling expressions dispelled them, and he went to him joyfully.

ment he had received, but when they went for him with switches he took to his heels.

And that bull-thistle went right along with him, thorning him at every jump, and causing him to utter much canine music.

He would now and then snap at his following tormentor, but that only got the thorns in his mouth, and again he skedaddled as hard as he could go.

The boys were delighted and concluded that that settled Sasafrass.

In the meantime he was tearing back to Clem, who heard his ki-ying quite a distance away, and ran out to the road.

They recognized each other, even as the Prodigal Son and father, and Clem received him with open, forgiving arms. He knew the boys had tied this tormentor to his tail, and although he was glad of it, since it would cure him of following them, he proceeded tenderly to remove it.

The dog nestled and whined close to him as though to express his gratitude.

"Now you see wha' it is to run away from you frien's an' go 'mong strangers. I hope it learn you a lesson dat las' you all you life," and he placed him on a soft bed of grass with many endearing words, and rubbed down his lacerated hind-quarters with a wisp of grass, after which he whined himself to sleep, a cured dog, at least for the time being.

An hour later on the boys passed the field where Clem was at work, and naturally stopped by the fence to see if the dog had returned or kept on running.

They were close to where he lay curled up, and hearing their voices, he looked up, and then make a break



with a loud ky-yi in the direction of where Clem was, and the boys also lit out.

"That purp is cured," said Jimmy.  
 "Poo' dog! He's been dreamin'," said Clem, who did not see his tormentors, and the cur nestled tremblingly between his feet. "It's a dreifull bad thing ter do wrong agin yer master, Sassafras. But go lay down an' I takes you to de barn purty soon."

The cur reluctantly obeyed, casting anxious looks up toward the road and finally hiding himself completely.

Well, during the next few days there never was a more obedient dog in the world than he was. But dogs will forget as well as men.

He got so he would wander off and be gone a long time, but as he came back every time, Clem forgave him.

One day he returned with a gray squirrel in his mouth that he had managed to steal out of the boys' box-trap, and he was very proud of it.

"Now, whar you get dat squ'll? You neber c'ase dat squ'll up a tree an' cotch him; you steal dat squ'll. Whar you hook it?"

But Sass wouldn't give it away. So Clem gave it to him to eat.

"Dat save part of my supper, anyway. But I wonder whar he got it? Wonder if he hab been up to de boys' traps? Well, dey won't know what's become ob it," he added, as he watched the dog eat it.

The next day Sassafras was missing in the afternoon and did not return at night, greatly to the anxiety of his owner, who feared he had gone for good. Nor did he return the next day, Saturday, and everybody chaffed him about the ingratitude of the world, and of diagonal yellow dogs in particular.

"And so your purp has forsaken yer, has he?" asked the boys.

It was a bright Sunday morning, and the village church bells could be plainly heard in the vale below. They were dressed for church, and, seated in the family carriage, were waiting for good Uncle Peter.

"I use dat dog well, an' he dun gone go back on me; so let him go," said Clem, sadly.

"He was handicapped with too much name. If you had called him Jack, or something like that, it wouldn't have driven him crazy."

The family drove away, and Clem walked slowly and sadly along the road in the other direction. His heart was almost broken by the conduct of that yellow dog, but yet he felt that he would like to find him again, if only to give him a kick.

He walked along the road for a mile or more, deep in meditation brown. He met a brother moke walking on along and almost as homely as he was himself.

It took them about ten minutes to exchange greetings, for the old coon had to tell about his terrible rheumatics, when Clem broke in:

"Did you see a stray yaller dog on you trabels dis way?"

"No. Lost one?"

"Yes."

They looked at each other a moment without speaking and then each continued his way.

Clem remembered the squirrel incident, and concluded that there was a possibility of his being lurking in the vicinity of the traps for another, and so he started in that direction.

#### CHAPTER VIII.

HE visited several of the traps, and even ventured to whistle once or twice, but there came no canine response.

Walking on a short distance further, he turned around a small clump of pines, when he came suddenly face to face with his dog, hanging by the neck—dead!

He had presumed to monkey around a snare, and had put his head in too far.

The picture of Clem Brown, brought thus suddenly face to face with his dead pet, must be seen to be realized.

"Well, you mean, thievin' Jack Sheppard dog, you got dar at las', din' you? All my good advice an' a quarter gone! You delas' dog I eber set my heart on, you is. Steal heah, tryin' fer pick up some game, an' got pick up yourself, eh? Sarves you right. But you is no game," said he, taking him from the snare. "You's no good live or dead, an' I chuck you in a hole."

Good as his word, he took the dead cur by the hind leg, and, walking a few rods away to a ravine, he threw it from his sight forever.

Then he returned and reset the snare, and tried to make things look as though nothing had happened, after which he went slowly back to the farm-house, so as not by any chance to be too late for his Sunday dinner.

That Sunday dinner included baked pork and beans—so dear to the darkies' hearts.

Several of the men sat around in the shade of the apple trees, the boughs of which were hung heavy with promise for the autumn.

"Hello, Clem. Where is Sassafras—any news from him?" asked Mr. Joy, pleasantly.

"Yes, any news from the yellow dog with the sweet-scented name?" asked another.

"Folks, dat dog am dead," said he, sadly.

"Good thing for the dog!"

"Good thing for everybody else!"

Clem sighed, but made no reply.

"Be yees goin' ter wear crape on yer arm?" asked Pat Malone.

But he made no reply to this, for it seemed to him to be too flippant for the occasion.

But just then the dinnerbell rang and Clem forgot his dog grief instantly.

The family returned from service a little later on.

They had charmed the villagers for the second time by singing an anthem in a way they had never heard before, being invited to front seats in the choir loft, where their handsome presence was a sure mash on everything wearing petticoats.

Of course Uncle Peter was very proud of them. They behaved themselves like little well-bred gentlemen, but one or the other of them (neither remaining to Sunday-school) must have left a card.

Scarcely had they driven away before one of the children discovered a harmless spotted snake in the aisle, and of course yelled snakes and got upon a pew seat, as did the others, and for the next ten minutes, and until the reptile was killed, there was anything but the semblance of Sunday-school.

Finally one brave lad, after somebody else had killed it, took it triumphantly by the tail and carried it out of doors.

And that's what makes me believe that one of those twins must have had something in his pocket and left it in the church-aisle as he was going out.

"A very strange thing happened last Sabbath just after you left," said Deacon Chump to Mr. Nettlebone, a few days after, when they chanced to meet.

"Indeed! Where?"

"In the church."

"What was it?" and the good deacon proceeded to tell him all about the snake.

"That was a strange incident, indeed," and Uncle Peter winked to himself internally, for he thought he knew where that reptile came from.

He told the boys about it the next day and watched them closely as he did so, but there was not a look that would betray them. They simply laughed as other boys would and said what a funny sight it must have been.

A day or two after that, while the boys were laying off in the shade of a cherry tree that had nothing better to do than to furnish shadows for people, having gone out of the business for the season, a tall, venerable old darky approached and saluted them respectfully, at the same time removing his hat and mopping his brow.

"Good-morning, young gentlemen."

"Good-morning, pop."

"Warm day?"

"Yes, very."

"But it is not too warm there in the shade to have your heads examined."

"What for?"

"Phrenological developments. I am a preacher Sundays, and week days I go around examining craniums. I can tell you what your future is to be; what trade or profession it would be best for you to follow—all for fifty cents."

"But we are twins, so very much alike that the examination of one would do for both."

"Well, yes, I suppose so," he said, reluctantly.

"All right—come around by the gate and commence business," said Jimmy.

"Well, you certainly are unmistakable twins. I never saw such a resemblance," said the old preacher, sitting down his little bag.

"Yes, pop, but that's a chestnut. Give us something new."

He thereupon commenced to feel his head over and look very wise.

"You have the makings of a great man in you, my young friend," he said, at length.

"How big?"

"I am speaking intellectually. You would make a capital lawyer—your secretiveness is very large, as it is also in your twin."

"Oh, yes, we were cast in the one mold."

"You love music and mirth; you love to play practical jokes and not get found out. But you are honorable and generous in all your dealings. You have been well brought up, and in a few years the world will hear of you."

"Do you think so?"

"Oh, it cannot be otherwise. These two well rounded and balanced heads were not made to waste their sweetness on the desert air," said he, with much earnestness.

"No saccarine matter in all this?"

"No, my son, that is gospel truth. I deals in nothing else."

"All right. Here's your price for it. It is a rare commodity."

"Thank you."

"Now, there is a colored man working on the place that I want you to examine."

"All right. I'se ready."

"Give it to him straight," said Tim.

"That's the only way I give it to people," he replied, as they walked along.

They found Clem nearly at the end of his row near the fence, and naturally he stopped to look at them.

"Clem, this is a phrenologist. He has been examining our bumps and we want him to go for yours," said Jimmy.

"I'se got no bumps," said he.

"Oh, yes, you have, my friend. I am a minister of the gospel, and only do this on week days, so what I tell you you may depend upon, my friend."

"Come up here to the fence, take off your hat, and get to business," said Tim.

Reluctantly he obeyed, and the old man began to work through his woolly head.

After working it for about five minutes, he stopped and looked at him without saying a word.

"Well, you are about the biggest fool nigger I ever saw. You know enough for what you are doing and that is about all. Keep in nights," he added, laughing.

"Oh, I is, eh? Gitten outer heah," said he, picking up a stone. "or I jis' knock dat piety clean outen you," and they all three dusted.

"Comin' roun' heah pokin' fun at me—I broke some ob you jaws fus' you know. Dat's dem boys' wo'k, but I get good an' hunk with them befo' long."

"Did I tell the truth?" asked the old man, after they had got out of range.

"You did, indeed, and here's your money."

"Thanks," and he walked happily away.

The laugh for the boys was a good one.

And a loud one.

And a long one.

They didn't usually go in so heavy on a public laugh.

But this was something rare.

Too good to keep, in fact.

So they went to the kitchen where the man had tried to make an honest dollar.

They told Mrs. Roriarity all about the snap, and she joined them in the laugh.

"Faith, ther ould man was roight, for ther divil never will make room for him," said Mrs. Roriarity. "Well, fut divilment are youse lads up to next?"

"None at all. We came up here to tell you that we had sworn off eating pie," said Jimmy.

"Sworn off poie?"

"Yes."

"Fut for?"

"Well, Uncle Peter says they cause dyspepsia."

"Fut nonsense!"

"Don't you believe it, cookie?"

"Sure, an' I ates them mesill."

"Same as those you used to give us?"

"Ther very same. Oh, ye blackguards! ye base de-savers; sworn off eating poie, eh?"

"Yes."

She went to the pie box and brought forth two fat turnovers.

Oh, yes, they had sworn off!

Unless they were given them by the cook.

"Did yees say Yum Bung's new swing?"

"Swing?"

"Yes, a Chinaze swing."

"No. Where is it?"

"In the yard beyant."

"We'll take a look at it," said Jimmy, at the same time winking to his twin.

Out on the lawn, behind a neatly-trimmed hawthorn hedge, they found Yum Bung asleep in a very frail-looking hammock, or something as much like that as anything else, although it was far stronger than it looked.

This was some sort of a Chinese holiday, and all respectable sons and daughters of the "Flowery Kingdom" abstained from all labor, and devoted the time to meditation.

Mr. Nettlebone always respected his feelings, and gave him up a large portion of the day each year.

Yum Bung was passing his time in sleep, and looked as happy as a big sun flower.

It was an odd and peaceful picture, and almost Oriental in its make-up.

Those quiet twins winked at each other quietly as they walked away.

"One of those big ones left, isn't there?"

"Yes," replied Timmy.

"All right. That Chinaman has got too soft a thing of it. He wants to be startled from his dream of Oriental heaven. Get it."

His brother went up and brought down a big cannon cracker, the last one left, and they sauntered back to where Yum Bung was.

They called on Mrs. Roriarity first.

"Can you be deaf for a little while until something happens?"

"I can. Why?"

"And Uncle Peter is a good ways away?"

"He went on horseback, and I heard him telling one av the men that he was going to visit the sunny slope and see how his port grapes were getting along."

"All right."

And Jimmy took a match from his pocket and the two of them started.

The scene was still there.

So was Yum Bung.

He was working quite a vigorous snore at this time, or he might have been talking in his sleep. They placed that red thunderbolt directly under the Chinaman.

Then lighting the fuse at so long a distance from the powder, and quietly walked away.

In an instant more there was a violent explosion, and Yum Bung was blown into the atmosphere about five feet, coming down again on the grass, the most astonished individual in those parts.

"Murdie—murdie!" he cried, looking around in search of some one.

"What's ther matter wid yees—are yees crazy?" asked Mrs. Roriarity.

"Somebodie shootie like blazes."

"When?"

"Now."

"What for?"

"Me gib lup. Put blig clacker under my bed—shootie. Sklare blazie lout."

"Oh, you are crazy; I didn't hear anything."

"So be?" he asked, in wonder.

"Pon me sowl, yees must have been dreaming."

"Dreamie—no. Shootie me way lup sky, heap noise."

"Oh, yer off yer nut."

"Nuttie all yitie. Lookie—piece clacker," he added, picking up a piece of the exploded shell. "Where bloys?"

"Och, but they are somewhere about, yer can bet yer loife," said she, laughing.

"Hello, aunty, who fired the gun?" asked Jimmy, as the two came cheerfully upon the scene.

"Sure, Yum Bung says somebody was tryin' ter shoot him."



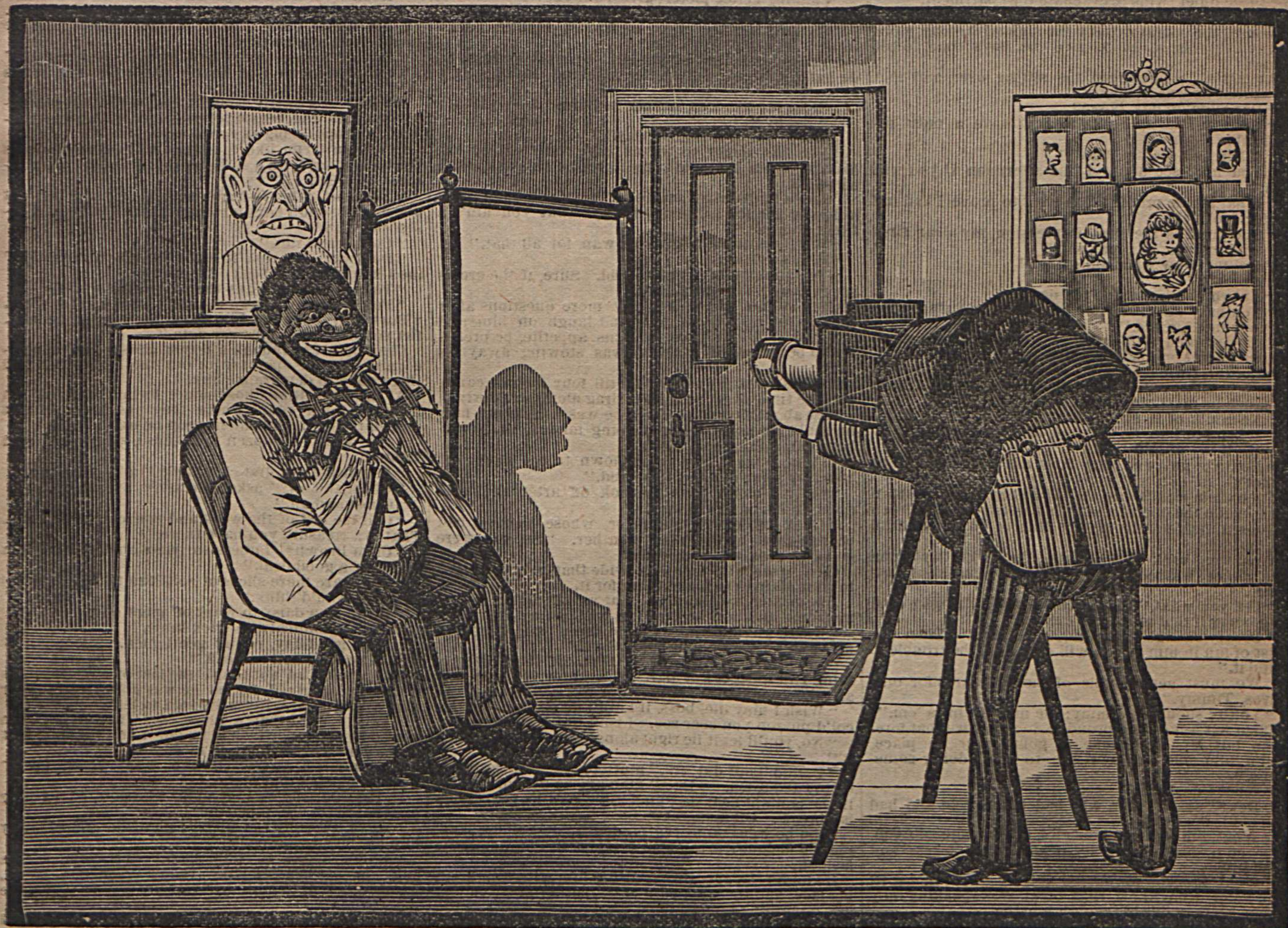
"No shootie—blowie lup," said Yum.  
 "Oh, you are going off your nut."  
 "No, nuttie all yitie," and he showed a large piece of the exploded shell.  
 "Well, that looks a little suspicious, I must admit. Hurt you?"  
 "Knockle me lup sky high."  
 "Oh, that is just what you want for exercise."  
 "Lexercise be slam bangle! I gettie lall lexercise I want without being blown up in the sky."  
 "Is that so?"  
 "Yes, and I want you bloys keepie way ffrom me," said he, angrily getting back into his hammock.  
 "What, keep away from you?"  
 "Yes, allie timie."  
 "You, my uncle Peter's trusted Yum Bung?"  
 "All samie."  
 "Want me to keep away?" asked Tim.

"Is it a go?"  
 Now Clem had all the vanity of his race, but if there was any one thing more than another that he had always longed for, it was his photograph.  
 "Do you really mean it, honey?"  
 "To be sure we do. We were speaking with the proprietor only the other day, and a note from us will cause him to do his best."  
 "When I go?"  
 "Any time when Uncle Peter will give you a day off."  
 That evening he went for the boss and told him what he wanted.  
 The idea tickled Mr. Nettlebone wonderfully, and he saw at a glance that his mischievous nephews were at the bottom of it, and there certainly was a good prospect of fun.

"All right. Get in and get at it soon's you can, boss; I's anxious."  
 "Well, I'll soon fix you. Take a seat here. Now compose yourself and assume a pleasing expression of countenance."  
 "All right, boss; I ken do dat."  
 "Yes, I see you can. Now fix your eyes on that point and don't remove them, only you can wink once a minute. Now, then!"  
 He retired to his operating-room, where a friend or two had peep-holes, and were nearly bursting with laughter.  
 Fixing the plate, he went out to his camera to proceed to business.

## CHAPTER IX.

CLEM sat in the chair in front of the camera, looking the picture of bland contentment.



"All right," said the operator, and Clem sat as still as a mouse, that cast-iron grin of his showing in all its extensive proportions. The cap was removed from the lense and the plate exposed for half a minute, the boys holding their grinning face perfectly motionless.

"Yes, both keepie way. Blood nuisance. Allie timie something happen. Something go bangle—snappie—ghostie. Blad eggs."

"Who is this you are talking about?"  
 "You two."  
 "Well, what about us?"  
 "Bloomlin nuisance, that's what I say."  
 "Who?"  
 "Oh, go blazie!" said he, turning away indignantly.

"Got a spare ticket?"  
 He refused to reply to any further chaffing and made believe go to sleep, while the boys made believe do something else.  
 After awhile they went to the barn where Clem had gone to work.

"You go way," said he, savagely.  
 "Who?"  
 "You uns. I tell you uncle on you, and if he knows his business he jus' broke you both in halves."  
 "What for?"  
 "Fo' bein' so full ob de debel."  
 "Who?"  
 "You. Now go on."  
 "Want your head examined?"  
 "No, I don't."  
 "Want your photograph taken?"  
 "No."  
 "I would like one," said Timmy.  
 "Oh, yes, no doubt, to poke fun at."  
 "Oh, no, but to take back home to remember you by."  
 "Yes, we'll pay for them."  
 "No doubt."

So he told him he could go the next day and have his mug done up in first-class style.

Of course the story of the phenologist got all over the place and occasioned many and many laughs. But the idea of his going to sit for a large-sized photograph was even more comical than that was.

The next morning Clem was up early. He had no good clothes, but the boys told him they didn't want to remember his clothes, but wanted to have a picture of him as a regular plantation negro, and that was just what pleased him.

"You pay fo' dis?" he asked, as he started away for the village artist.  
 "Oh, yes, that's all right. We made all the arrangements."

Cheers and congratulations followed him, and each one wanted a picture.

"Golly, guess I hab to hab a bushel ob 'em. Didn't know I was so pop'lar," he muttered, or mused, as he walked along.

The boys and girls on their way to school had a good subject for laughter and ridicule. But Clem didn't mind that; he was going to have his photograph taken.

Quite a crowd followed him, having a curiosity to know where the moke was going, all of which pleased his vanity muchly.

The photographer laughed in his face, and Clem laughed back.

"You will make a striking picture, my friend."  
 "Do you think so?"  
 "Oh, I'm certain of it—a picture that will attract attention everywhere."

"It isn't every cullud gemman what kin have his picter took," he muttered, placidly.

Just then the operator appeared from the inner room, plate in hand, but with a smile upon his face.

"That is splendid. We shall have a beautiful picture," he remarked, as he fussed about the apparatus. And that laughing moke thought that it was he that had made the artist smile by means of his fine looks.

The boss of that photographic shop would have liked to laugh, but fearing to give away the secret, poked his head under the black ulster of the camera and hid his grinning visage.

This gave him time to compose himself, and then, coming out of his retirement, he placed the cap over the lense and put in his plate.

"As you are," he said, with a wave of his hand.

"Steady, now, and we will have a splendid picture."

He was grinning again, and that set Clem going still more, for he thought that the artist was all disintegrated on his general appearance.

"Steady, now, and we will have a most striking picture."

That is where the manipulator of lenses spoke the plain, unvarnished truth, for if everything went right that picture would indeed be a startling one.

And here was where those quiet twins appeared on the bill of that day's entertainment.

Clem fondly imagined that he was alone with the operator, but upon that score he was greatly in error.

He had entered the room alone, to be sure, but he had not remained in solitary grandeur all this time. The twins had followed him after he had been seated



by the chief malefactor of the establishment, and they were now behind his chair.

Between them, each holding on one edge, they held up a large card just over Clem's head.

Upon this card was drawn a most comical looking face which seemed to be grinning down upon Clem from the realms of space.

"All right," said the operator, and Clem sat as still as a mouse, that cast-iron grin of his showing in all its extensive proportions.

The cap was removed from the lense and the plate exposed for half a minute, the boys holding their grinning face perfectly motionless.

Clem was filled with a sense of the gravity of the occasion, but had he known what was behind him, it is doubtful if he would have been so well pleased.

"Don't move," cautioned the operator, as he threw the black cloth over the lense, this being the signal for those quiet twins to evacuate the apartment.

Carefully removing the plate and putting it upon one side, the operator went through with some more funny business, so as to give the boys time to get away.

At last he pronounced the sitting over, and told Clem that he was at liberty.

"Dat all fo' to-day, boss?"

"Yes, sir, and, as I said, we will have a most remarkable picture."

"When do I see um, boss?"

"You may see a proof this afternoon if you will call."

"What am de proof? Hab I got to prove I had my plecter taken?"

"The proof is the first impression, my dear sir—the trial picture, as I may say."

"Jes' ter show what um's like?"

"Exactly."

"An' yo' wo'k um up fom dat?"

"You have hit it, sir, to a nicety. You surprise me by your intelligence."

Clem grinned still more expansively than before, and as he put on his hat said, complacently:

"Reckon I warn't behind de doah when de smartness was giben out, boss. Guess Clem Brown knows as much as mos' niggahs, boss."

"No doubt of it, sir, no doubt."

"When kin I see de firs' one, did yer say?"

"We'll say at four o'clock."

"Don' yo' go away, den, boss, afo' dat, kase I'll be punct'al, an' den' yo' fo'get it."

Then Clem went away, feeling as big as six common men, while the operator and his assistants proceeded to loosen their waistcoats for fear of bursting off all the buttons.

Clem went back to the house, the twins watching him as he walked along, swelling with self-importance.

"Tell you what," remarked Jimmy, "things would be gloomy if that moke went away."

"Dreary enough," responded Timmy. "There's a grist of fun in him, if you will only take the trouble to grind it."

"We must get a couple of those pictures for ourselves, Timmy."

"You're shouting, Jimmy; we mustn't miss 'em."

Clem felt almost too proud to do any work that forenoon, but Mr. Nettlebone, in going over the place, found him idle, and told him to go to doing something.

"Wha' I do, boss?"

"Hey?" asked Peter, who had taken cold and had one of his deafspells.

"Wha' kin' ob wo'k shell I do?" resumed Clem. "De co'n don't want hoein' yet, an' de taters don't need it."

"What are you mumbling at, you stupid nigger?" said Peter, who knew that Clem was speaking only because he saw his big mouth moving.

"I ain't mumbling, boss; I'se spokin' to youse," and Clem raised his voice.

"What do you say?"

"Yo' don't tol' me yo' is deaf, boss?" said Clem, who had never heard of this infirmity of his master's.

"Deaf?" snapped Peter, who never would acknowledge this occasional failing of his; "of course not, but if you will chew tobacco you must expect that folks can't understand you."

"Why, bress yo' heart, boss, I neber did. I tinks too much ob my teef."

"Well, go to work, then, and don't hang around doing nothing."

"What I do, boss?" shouted Clem.

"Go feed the pigs and clean the horses," returned Peter, who now understood, and then he went on toward the house.

"Well, I neber did!" muttered Clem, as he got to work. "I neber knowed de boss war hard ob hearin'." Guess I kin say what I like now, 'case he won't hear me 'f I 'peak low kind o'. Dat am a discobery."

When the boys returned to the house, it being still an hour or more to dinner, they interviewed Mrs. Rorarity on the subject of pie, and told her about Clem's having his pictures taken.

"Faix, did that naygur go to have his ugly likeness took?" she asked.

"Yes, aunty, and it will be a good picture," said Timmy.

"A good plecter, is it? Faix, it won't be the loikeness of that naygur, thin, wid his mouth lukin loike the lock av a canal, an' his little eyes an' big ears."

"You wait and see," said Jimmy, with a wink, making a murderous attack on his turnover.

"I say, aunty," spoke up Timmy, dusting the crumbs off his mouth, "I'm going to reform."

"Reform, is it?" cried the good-natured Irishwoman. "Begorra, phat need is there in that? Sure ye're good enough already."

"No, I must reform."

"You, is it?"

"Yes, turn over, you know," with a sly grin.

"Turn over, is it? Ha-ha-ha! I know phat yez mane now. It's another pole yez want."

"Why, how did you guess it?" said that quiet rascal, with a look of innocence, as he took the plump and nicely browned delicacy in his hand and proceeded to demolish it.

"Don't you think I need reforming, too?" asked Jimmy.

"Faix, as ye're the twin av yer brother, I think I'll have to turn you over, too," and Jimmy got his second edition as well as Timmy.

Then those quiet twins told the housekeeper about the snap they had played on Clem, telling her to let it get around that the comical nig had sat for his likeness.

At dinner, therefore, while Clem was filling his jacket, Yum Bung said to him with a grin:

"Clemmy gettee plecter; give Yum one?"

"How you know 'bout dat?"

"Clemmy lookkee nice in frame; flighten away ratee."

"Youse too smart, ol' pig-tail. Guess if youse go to de gallery youse smash de machine wif yo' ugly looks."

"Gibee me likeness, hangee in barn."

"What fo'?"

"Sclare tamps—thinkee debil."

"Yez had ought to let us have wan," added Pat Malone, when the laugh that greeted this sally had subsided.

"Specs I gibs my frien's one," returned Clem, with a loving glance at pretty Peggy, "but you ain't a frien' ob mine."

"Well, yez ought to give me wan, for all that."

"Why so?"

"To shlick up in der corn-field. Sure, if the crows see it, they'll fall-down dead."

Clem did not care to ask any more questions after that, as the rest all got the grand laugh on him, and although it did not take away his appetite, he preferred to be let alone while he was stowing away his grub.

He was on pins and needles till four o'clock came, and the time never seemed to drag along so slowly.

Just about that time, when he was wondering how he could get away without being missed, Mr. Nettlebone came along and said:

"Clem, I want you to go down to the store and bring up some bundles I ordered."

"Golly, I won't have to hook off arter all," said Clem, in his natural tones.

"Hook off, eh?" said Peter, whose hearing had been restored by the warm weather. "So you were going to hook off, were you?"

Clem opened his mouth so wide that he was obliged to shut his eyes to make room for it.

His master had been as deaf as an adder in the morning, and now he heard as well as any one.

"Guess yo' mus' mistook me, boss," said Clem. "I neber said nuffin' 'bout hookin' off."

"Don't try to lie out of it, Clem. If there is anything I despise, it's a liar. You know you are lazy and like to get out of doing your work."

"Wish I may die, boss, if I ain't de mos' indus'tious col'd pusson you eber see. I isn't 'fraid ob wo'k."

"No, you'll let it lie right alongside and never touch it."

"Donno 'bout dat 'ere," muttered Clem, as he walked toward town. "De ol' man am so deaf dis mornin' he couldn't hear de t'under, an' now he hear a fel-lah breafe. Ol' man got snakes, 'pears to me."

Then he went on to the photographic gallery, leaving his master's errand till the last in characteristic fashion.

He found the operator awaiting him with a smile on his face, and that tickled him so that he fairly chuckled, imagining himself to be the dandiest ducky in the world.

"Hab you got de proof ready, sah?" he asked, expectancy showing itself in every line of his black and shining phiz.

"Yes, sir, here it is."

The operator spread a photographic proof out on the table in front of Clem, and narrowly watched that coon's face.

At first sight of his counterfeit presentment Clem was very much pleased, and grinned for all he was worth.

Then he suddenly caught sight of the shadowy outlines of that laughing mug above his own face.

"Wha' dat?" he ejaculated. "Wha' yo' let somebody 'tand behind me? I don't want 'noder man's plecter."

"No man stood behind you, my dear sir," said the artist, with a slight prevarication.

No man had stood there, to be sure, although two boys had, so that while the operator did not break one of the commandments, he certainly did crack it to some extent.

"Den who dat ober my head?" asked Clem, pointing to the face above his own.

The operator looked annoyed, and then frightened, and finally asked:

"Are you a believer in spirits, sir?"

"Wha' you mean?" stammered Clem, his hair beginning to straighten out.

"Do you believe in ghosts?"

"Oh, Lawd! dat ol' granfader ob mine mus' be walkin' agin."

"So you have a grandfather's ghost, have you? Did you ever see it?"

"N—no, I didn't, but de witch woman down in Souf Ca'lina she tell me dat he come 'f I don't gib her a dollah a monf. Oh, Lawd, I fought I get rid ob dat when I come Norf."

"Then that's the ghost of your grandfather hovering over you," said the artist with an awful sigh, though he was ready to explode.

"Wha' fo' yo' take him plecter too?" demanded Clem, indignantly.

"Why, how could I help it?" was the mild protest.

"Couldn't yo' shoo him away, say yo' pra'rs or suffin'?"

"But I didn't see the ghost."

"Yo' didn't sawd him?"

"Of course not," was the earnest rejoinder. "How could I when he was no relation of mine?"

"An' dat ghos' stood behin' me all dat tim I war sittin' fo' my photygraf?"

"Not all the time, perhaps, but long enough to be taken in the picture."

"Mus' I hab him too if I took de likeness?" asked Clem, not relishing the idea at all.

"Why, I don't see how I can get rid of him, now he's there."

"Kean't yo' cober him ober so's he won't show?"

"I don't know," answered the operator, dubiously. "I am afraid not. I can't control spirits, and he might show up any time."

"De Lor' sakes! Den I don't want de plecter at all."

That poor coon was nearly frightened out of his skin at the prospect.

His hair was nearly straight, his limbs tottered under him, and the perspiration stood out on his forehead in drops as big as birds' eggs.

"Wouldn't you like to sit again?" asked the boss likeness-taker, with a smile as bland as that of an insurance agent.

"N—no—I'd be f—frightened fo' my life les' dat ghos' an' his hull family mought come an' 'tand behin' me agin."

"Oh, I guess not."

"Don' wan' ter resk it, sah. De witch woman tol' me I hab trubble wif dat ol' man."

"Then you don't want the picture finished?"

"Fo' de Lor' sakes, n—no!" stammered Clem. "Burn him up, 'stroy him fom de face ob de earf. Bet yo' life I don't come yer agin."

Clem bolted as though a dozen ghosts had appeared, and then the operator let out the laugh that had threatened to demoralize him.

At the same time those quiet twins bounced out from an inner room where they had seen all that passed through convenient peep-holes.

"We want a dozen of those pictures," said Timmy.

"Finished up in first-class style," added Jimmy. "Ghost and all?" asked the artist, laughing.

"Ghost and all."

"Call the last of the week and you can have them. That is a treasure you have there."

"Clem Brown? I guess so; we wouldn't have him leave for a good deal."

"There are more slices of solid fun to be cut off of him than you'd think."

"He's just a daisy to work off gags on."

"And as comical as a trick mule."

"Well, good-day, young gentlemen. The pictures will be ready when you call."

Poor Clem had not heard the last of that ghost, as he fondly imagined, for, as he was going into supper that evening, Mrs. Rorarity said to him:

"Faix, I h'ard that a ghost appeared to yez whin yez had yer plecter took? Bedad, I don't wondher at it, for yer face is enough to raise the dead."

"G'long wif youse. Dunno what youse talkin' 'bout," snorted that moke.

In the doorway he met Yum, who pointed his long fingers at him and piped out:

"Hi ya, Clemmy see ghlost; glanfader ghlost; cally him off, he no workee."

"I don't spoke to Chinamen," said Clem, with a sniff, as he passed the yellow-skinned Oriental.

"Youse bettah 'tend to yo' washin' an' let 'spectable folks be."

"Did yez bring yer ghost along wid yez?" asked Pat, when Clem sat down. "If yez did, he'll have to set at the second table, fur thur's no room fur him here."

"Some folks tinks dey knows eb'ything, 'pears to me," muttered Clem. "You isn't high-toned to hab a ghos', kase dey puts yo' relations in de stobe fo' kin'lins when dey die, an' dey don't hab no sperrits lef'."

That was one on Pat, and as the laugh was on him, the others kept still, Clem thinking to himself:

"Bet yo' auy'ting dem dratted boys go tell all about dis. Ef I isn't glad when dey goes home, den I tell yo'."

And that night, after dark, when the men were singing, poor Clem heard constant allusions to his grandfather's ghost sung to the tune of "Grandfather's Clock" and other airs until he was heartily sick of the whole business.

"Dem boys put me up to habin' my likeness took, an' dey tol' dat ghos' ter come loafin' 'round," he muttered. "Should t'ink dat ghos' might be in bettah business, an' I tol' him so ef I seed him."

However, another surprise was in waiting for him, for when he went up to his room he had no sooner opened the door than he saw a great grinning face in the window.

The boys had cut out the outlines on the card with a sharp knife, and stuck the card itself in the sash, the moonlight shining through the cuts and showing a perfect face.

"G'way dar, don' want yo'," gasped Clem, his teeth chattering.

The door blew shut with a bang, and the ghostly face in the window appeared plainer than before.

Clem could not stand that, and he made a dash for the hall, yelling murder, blue blazes and everything else he could think of.

His cries alarmed the servants, and they all flocked around to see what ailed him.

"Phat's the matter wid yez, anyhow?" demanded



Mrs. Roriarity. "Can't yez let a dacint woman slape, and not go to settin' up a caterwaulin' like that in the middle av the noight?"

"Guess ef youse sawd a ghos' youse hollah same as oder folks."

"Where is it?" cried the crowd.

"Right in de windah ob my room."

"Let's chase it out."

"Golly, I wish youse would!"

Then they all filed into Clem's sleeping apartment, but of course nothing was to be seen.

Those quiet twins had pulled the thing down, a string leading from the window to the ground.

That laughing moke got a great chaffing on account of his ghost, and he was puzzled more than ever, for he could swear that he had seen the pale face in the window when he had first entered.

He went to sleep with his head under the sheets for fear he might see the apparition again, and more than once during the night he started up, almost expecting to see it standing by his bed.

The next day he heard nothing about the ghost, and when the next one arrived and no mention had been made of it, he congratulated himself that the thing had been forgotten.

That only goes to show how little he knew of those quiet twins, and how easy it was to lull his suspicions to sleep.

A couple of days passed and Clem was left alone, the boys amusing themselves with their water wheels and with a team of goats which old Peter had given them.

They had a light wagon, just big enough for two, and to this the goats were harnessed and driven all around town, the two youngsters enjoying themselves hugely.

We shall have more to tell about these goats presently, but just now we will be satisfied with introducing them to the reader, begging him not to let them slip his mind.

One morning when Clem got up and proceeded to array himself in his Jim Crow suit, he suddenly beheld on the wall a nicely framed photograph.

Walking over to it, he recognized his own expansive countenance, surmounted by the shadowy outlines of a grinning face which seemed to come out of the clouds.

"Drat dat ghos', dere he am agin!" gasped Clem, hurrying on his clothes and getting out of the room as soon as possible.

When he went in to breakfast, he found his plate turned bottom up, and was about to turn it over, when Pat Malone turned up his plate and said:

"Begorra, do we have chromos fur breakfast? Faix, that's enough to take away me appetoite."

The others all turned over their plates and each took a card from the table and began to look at it.

Then they all turned them toward Clem, who began to shake as though he had the chills.

Everybody at the table had one of his photographs, and in all of them the ghost occupied a prominent place.

"Fo' de Lor' sakes! where yo' get dem?" he gasped. "I tol' dat likeness man he needn't to work dem up."

Just then Yum Bung toddled in, and he also had one of the pictures and was grinning at it.

"Hi, ya! Clemmy gimme picky; goode fo' makee cat lun."

"You—you, whar yo' get um?" stuttered Clem, his hair standing up.

Then, by some strange fascination, he turned up his plate.

There was that horrid picture staring at him again. He gave a howl, jumped up from his seat, and made a dash for the door.

It was shut, and upon the middle panel grinned that same old photograph.

"Bress de Lor'! I'se haunted!" gasped the poor coon, and he fell backward and sat down in a big bowl of steaming hot stew that Mrs. Roriarity had just placed on a bench previous to dishing it out.

"Goodness' sakes!" howled Clem, "I'se scalded or suah!"

## CHAPTER X.

To see that coon jump up out of that dish of hot soup was as good as a play to his fellow-servants.

"Faix, yez can ate it now," sputtered Mrs. Roriarity, "for yez don't suppose anny av us 'll tech it after ye've had yer fat carcass in it."

"Where dat ghos' dat frighten me?" demanded Clem, looking around.

"Sure there wuz none, unless yez calls us ghosts."

"De photygraf of de ghost ob my gran'fader, dat's de one I mean. Where am it?"

"Sure yez must be dhramin'."

Certainly there was no picture to be seen, either on the table, on the door, or in the possession of his fellow-servants.

"Clemmy got sklew loose," suggested Yum. "Offee nnt, clazy, so be."

"Faix, I always thought he had rats in his garret."

"He's as looney as a June bug."

"Begorra, I think it's the masther's woine he's been after dhrinkin'."

"Tain't so," muttered Clem, taking his seat, but quickly jumping up again.

The fact was the bosom of his trousers was still warm with the hot stew, and when Clem sat down the heat struck in and made him jump.

"Neber min', I eats stan'in' up," he declared, and transferring the pan of stew to the table, he proceeded to make an inroad upon it.

"Golly! I sits down in de hash ev'y day," he chuckled, "an' den I gets all de mo'."

After all it was going to be a pretty chilly day when that laughing moke got left on the feed question.

If any one had bet against Clem's ability to clean

out that dish of stew, they and their money would have parted company, for he finished it all and licked the plate.

"Begorra, if yez were given all yez could ate," remarked Pat, "the masther would be ruined. Ye're as bad as a horse for consumption av grub."

"Don't spects I'se gwine to starve, does ye? 'F I don' eat I keant wo'k."

When he saw there was no chance of getting any more to eat, Clem went off to find something to do.

Mrs. Roriarity requesting him to bring her a basket of chips for the stove, as she wished to get up a particularly hot fire later in the forenoon, Clem betook himself to the wood-pile and got to work.

Now it happened that the two goats belonging to those quiet twins were at that moment tied loose, and were disporting themselves in the yard, seeking what they might devour.

Clem, being rather fat, had to stoop over to pick up the chips, and his broad posterior, as he moved about, presented a most tempting mark.

One of the goats espied it, and, considering himself challenged, he put down his head forthwith and charged at the target.

That moke never knew what was coming until he got it, and then down he went like a drunken ox.

"Wha' dat?" he yelled, as he picked himself half up, resting on his hands and knees.

He saw one of the goats eying him suspiciously, and knew that he must be the culprit.

"Where dat William goat come fom?" he muttered. "I didn't know dey was any goats—"

Now, the second goat, being on the other side, was unperceived by the poor ducky, who thought he had but one to contend against.

Number two was in for fun just as much as number one, and, seeing that broad target flaunted before his face, determined to have a charge at it.

He knocked the moke and his speech silly in one round, and sent the poor fellow sprawling on his nose.

"Wha' dat?" he grunted, as he got up and turned around in his confusion. "Who hit me dat time?"

He could see but one goat, and thought that this was the one that had butted him first.

"How you get roun' on de oder side o' me?" he asked. "Pears to me you is bery libely, even fo' a goat. Where you come fom, anyhow? Wha' yo' mean by insultin' a 'spectable col'd man like dat?"

He leaned over with his big hands resting on his fat knees while he put this question, and instantly the first goat construed this as a signal for the attack.

At it he went, full tilt, and again Clem went down before the assault.

A peal of laughter greeted his ears, and he jumped up in time to see those quiet twins skipping around the corner of the woodshed.

"Dem dratted boys put dat William goat up to buckin' me," he muttered. "Neber min', I git eben on—"

Goat number two, thinking that he had not had his share of the fun, now rushed up and took his second whack, knocking Clem endwise in a twinkling.

That was too much for the coon, and he began to think he was certainly haunted.

How a goat at which he was looking could strike him from behind was entirely beyond his comprehension.

Until he discovered the mystery he would not get up, and so he lay there looking around suspiciously and wondering if he were not bewitched.

Just then the boys called to the goats, and both animals skipped past the prostrate coon and disappeared behind the shed.

"Well, I declar', I neber fought ob dat," mused Clem, as he pivoted around so as to be sure that there were no more goats in the neighborhood.

The coast was clear and he therefore arose, rubbing his legs and muttering vengefully:

"I get eben on dem William goats ef it cos' me de job. What dey want to come buckin' a innercent niggah fo', I wanter know? Dey orter be 'shamed ob demselves."

Then he went on picking up his chips, glancing furtively around now and then in order to be sure that there were no more belligerent goats in the immediate vicinity.

"Nuffin' but trouble all de time eber since I come, an' now dem goats hab got to step in and help dem two ornary boys pester de soul out ob dis niggah. Ef de libin' warn't so good I leab de plantation dis minute."

Soon after that, upon going to the house, Clem heard a noise, and, looking up, he saw the boys in their goat-cart driving down the walk in fine style.

"Good-bye, Clem," shouted Timmy; "better get eyes put in the back of your head."

"Or wear spectacles behind," added Jimmy.

Then the twins turned into the road and drove toward town, their merry laughter floating behind upon the summer breeze.

"Ef dat ain't de foolishhest t'ing yit," muttered the disgusted moke, "to go an' buy dem dratted twins a goat ca'lage, when dey's ponies an' hosses a plenty a'ready. Guess I had to walk when I was deir age. Dat ol' man he spoil 'em fur suah."

As has been mentioned before, Clem had a sneaking fondness for Peggy, the mulatto girl, and had deceived himself into thinking that she returned his affections.

Well, in one way she did return them, for, having no use for them, she declined them without thanks and sent them back.

However, Clem would not take no for an answer, and persisted in his attentions, much to the girl's disgust, for she had no notion of taking up with such a big, fat, black object as Clem, being decidedly fastidious in her tastes.

"You don't treat Peggy right," said one of the men

that afternoon. "She is very fond of you, and you don't pay her any attention at all."

"Fo' de Lor' sakes, I'se ready to go right off to church any minute," declared Clem. "It's Peggy dat don't treat me right."

"Can't you see that she is fond of you?"

"Ye don't tol' me? Why, she's allus callin' me brack an' lazy, and a low-down niggah an' all dat. Is dat de way she shows her confections fo' me?"

"Women go by contraries. You just keep at it, and by and by she'll turn around and be as loving as you can wish."

"Bress yo' heart, I done been tryin' ter make dat yaller gal lub me eber sence I been on de plantation. What mo' kin I do? Kin yer tol' me?"

"Why don't you give her a serenade?"

"Who she?"

"She?"

"Dat Sarah Nade you talk about? Am she a cousin to Peggy?"

"No, no, I mean give her a concert, play the banjo under her window some night, sing something sweet and all that."

"Golly, I kin sing, I tol' you."

"Of course you can, and it was only jealousy that made those fellows throw you in the goose pond that night."

"You t'ink ef I play de banjo and sing she like it?"

"Certainly. She can't help it."

"Den I do it dis bery ebenin'."

"That's right; I like your spunk."

"Wall, I done reckon I hab as much as de nex man, an' ef sweet singin' kin catch dat yaller gal, I'se de indiwiddle dat'll do it."

Now those quiet twins were at the bottom of this little piece of business, as they were in every bit of fun that went on.

They were so dreadfully quiet and innocent, however, that no one would have suspected them unless told, and only a select few were let into the secret.

When all was dark and still around the house Clem took up his position under the window where he was told Peggy would appear, and began to tune up.

He played several pieces as a sort of prelude, and then began to sing, beginning with "Dearest May," and going on to "Nancy Till," and other love songs dear to the African heart.

He was in the midst of "Oh, Susannah, don't you cry for me," when a faint light was seen at the window under which he was playing.

Then something fluttered down and hung suspended within reach of his hand.

It was a note, as could easily be seen even in that light.

"Golly, she am sendin' me a lub letter a'ready," muttered Clem.

That love-sick coon put down his banjo and made a grab for the note.

It was tied securely to a stout cord, and would not come off at the first tug.

"Golly, I gits him ef I pulls de house down."

Then the poor moke gave the cord a terrible yank, being determined to get that note at all hazards.

He could not read, to be sure, but then he could get some one to read it for him, and it was something even to have a note from the object of his affections, whether he were able to read it or not.

So he tugged at the cord, fully determined to get what was on the end of it.

So he did, though what he got was on the upper, not the lower end.

And that was a bucket of water hung on a hook, the pulling of the rope turning it upside down.

Poor Clem got a ducking and a surprise, neither being very pleasant.

He sputtered and gasped and choked as the cold shower fell all over him, sousing him from head to foot, and nearly drowning him.

For a moment he stood there, utterly used up and demoralized, not knowing whether to clear out or stay and continue his serenade.

In an instant lights appeared in every window of that part of the house, and all his fellow-servants were seen looking down upon him.

Then a chorus of laughter greeted his ears, and he knew that once more had he been made the victim of a practical joke.

He caught up his banjo and made tracks as fast as his fat legs would carry him.

"Wishermaydie ef I eber takes any more trouble ober dat yaller gal agin," he sputtered, as he went up to his room.

All was dark and silent in that part of the house now, and Clem could not lay the joke at the door of any of the servants.

"Dem boys ag'in," he mused, as he got into bed. "All de troubles I hab comes fom dem dratted twins. Dey seems as quiet as mice, but dey is reg'lar little imps fo' all dat."

He knew well enough not to accuse the boys, however, as they were favorites with all the household, and such a course would only make him the butt of ridicule for all hands.

As he lay on his cot he heard the boys somewhere outside singing, their voices sounding strangely sweet in the darkness and silence of the night.

"Yas, dey kin sing about heaben an' de golden sho an' all dat," he muttered, wrathfully, "but dey is imps, all de same, an' if dey gets dere, it'll be case de debbil won't hab 'em in de oder place fo' feah dey all de time play tricks on um."

The next day was warm and cloudy, just the right sort for fishing, and as Clem was passionately fond of the sport, he begged off from work, promising to catch a mess of fish for dinner.

"Faix, do yez think the loikes av ye can catch fish?" asked Mrs. Roriarity.

"Deed I kin, and lots ob 'em."

"Ye moight in the dark whin they couldn't see yez,



fur yer big mouth wud froighen thim away if they saw it."

"Clemmy go fishee," said Yum Bung. "Fishee take him flo' suckee, biggee mouth, no blain, allee same cod-fishee."

"Wha' do Chinaman know 'bout fishin'? Bet I cotch more in an hour dan you cotch all day."

"Faix, the two av yez is enough to froighen all the fishes out av the river."

"Nevee mind Hishooman," giggled the heathen; "takee slow, go uppee liver, catchee lot fishee. Yum go too, show where catchee, so be."

"Yis, go along, the two av ye. It's the two orphans ye are, and be the same token it's too often that we have to see yez loafin' around."

"Clemmy go fishee long o' Yum?" asked the Celestial with his placid smile.

"I isn't proud ef I is good lookin', Marse Heathen, an' I jes' libs go wif you ez anybody."

So the excursion was planned, and the two freaks began to prepare for it at once, getting poles, lines and bait, and other necessities, including a basket of lunch and a bottle of ginger pop.

At last they set off for the river provided with poles and baskets, and bent on having a good time, safe from annoyance from those quiet twins.

As luck would have it, however, the boys had gone off on a little expedition of their own, at a point just around a bend in the river, somewhat further up stream from where Clem and Yum Bung were going.

Arrived at the river, Yum led the way to where an old flat-bottomed scow was moored, and in this they placed the poles, lines and baskets.

Then they loosened the line, shoved out into the stream, and taking up a pair of very dilapidated-looking oars, proceeded to paddle.

As there was no concert of action, however, the only result of their paddling was to keep the scow turning around and around.

"Where go?" asked Yum. "Turn lound allee time. How be?"

"Wha' fo' yo' pull oder way when I pull dis?" demanded Clem. "Youse dunno nuffin 'bout pullin'."

"Dloopee hooke, stand still, no go. How?"

"Does youse mean let down de mud hook?"

"Yep, lettee hooke go; catchee bottom."

"Dat a good idee. Didn' know youse hab so much sense."

There was a small anchor in the boat, with a few fathoms of line attached to it, and as there was more chance of catching fish by remaining in one spot than by continually moving about, Clem let it go, and the scow was moored in mid-stream.

"Bettie catchie fish fo' Clemmy," said Yum, baiting his hook and dropping his line into the water.

"H'm! Youse donno nuffin'," declared Clem, taking the precaution to spit on his bait before dropping his line overboard.

Without that ceremony he considered that it was useless to try and charm the finny tribes from their watery beds.

"Yo' don' cotch no fish ef yo' don' fust spit on de hook," he observed. "Don' know de fust ting 'bout fishin', yo' don't, Mistah Bung."

"Yum catchie first fishie, so be. Dlen see how muchie know."

The two piscatorial artists sat one at either end of the scow on the low bench, facing down stream, their poles extended over the water, and their eyes fastened upon their floats.

The very moment that they felt a nibble they would be ready to yank up the lines so as to have the honor of catching the first fish.

"Gottie bitee?" asked Yum, as Clem's float began to bob up and down.

Clem fetched one of his big hands on the back of his neck with a whack, and replied:

"I'se got de fust bite, but him am a 'skeeter bite. Dem 'skeeters knows rich blood when dey smells it, I tol' you."

"Hi-ya! Gottie bite!" yelled Yum, yanking, at his line.

At the same time Clem's bob went clean under, and the line straightened out as taut as a telegraph wire.

The moke gave a yell and jerked his pole upward, bringing to view a fine fat perch.

"Hi-ya, gottee fish!" cackled Yum Bung, gleefully, as he hauled in on his line.

And he did get a fish, but not in the way he expected.

The energy with which Clem yanked up that perch caused it to swing over toward Yum Bung and take him squarely in the mouth, making him wink.

"Cussee, why do?" he yelled, jumping back and nearly capsizing himself.

Then he yanked in on his own line and secured a finny treasure, which he quickly threw in the bottom of the scow to keep company with Clem's perch.

"Catchee nex' fish," said Yum, boastfully. "Dis one allee Clemmy gettee, so be."

"Don' yo' hollar till you'm out ob de woods," cautioned Clem. "I let yo' cotch dat firs' one so's yo' wouldn't get 'scouraged but dat all yo' git."

"Clemmy dlunk, say dat, no sab' fishee."

Then they sat as before for some time, neither being able to catch a fish.

Clem finally succeeded in getting a couple, and then for several minutes the two fishermen sat at each end of the scow, their poles extending over the water, the lines hanging loosely down, and the bobs floating idly on the stream.

Just about this time those quiet twins concluded to take a swim, and, undressing on the bank, slipped into the river and started off for a race.

"I say, Jimmy, do you see that scow down there?" said Timmy, as they swept around the bend of the river.

"Yes, I do, and there's somebody fishing from it."

"Don't you know who they are?"

"Why, it's that laughing moke, Clem Brown."

"And that grinning Chinaman, Yum Bung."

"Let's play roots on 'em, Jimmy."

"That's the talk, Timmy; but how?"

Both the twins were now swimming slowly and quietly, side by side, taking easy strokes so as not to alarm the two fishermen whose backs were turned toward them.

Just then Clem caught another fish, and the boys ducked for fear he might turn around and see them.

"Stay where you are," said Timmy, "and I'll swim down and have some fun with them."

"Pull the plug out of the scow."

"The very thing."

"Don' toi' me I keant cotch no fish," laughed Clem, as he dropped his line in again and sat holding his pole in both hands, the end resting on the bottom of the scow.

Yum Bung said nothing, but sat at the other end of the scow, looking the picture of patient resignation.

There sat those two beauties waiting for a nibble, engrossed entirely in their sport, and utterly unconscious of a third figure which now appeared.

The head and arm of a boy were now seen just behind the scow, amidsthips, completing the picture.

The head came to the gunwale of the scow, and the arm reached over and seized the plug in the bottom.

Little did those two absorbed fishermen know what was in store for them.

Presently the head and arm disappeared, and with them the big wooden plug from the bottom of the scow.

Timmy swam back to Jimmy, exhibited his prize, and said:

"Let's wait and see the fun."

"Yes, for there will be high jinks in that scow before long."

## CHAPTER XI.

We left Clem Brown and Yum Bung quietly fishing off the side of the scow which they had anchored in the stream.

So noiselessly had those quiet twins approached the spot, and so carefully had Timmy performed his little trick, that neither of the victims once suspected the nice little job that had been put up on them.

There they sat at either end of the scow intent on fishing, and thinking of nothing else, while all the while the water came running in at the bottom.

Yum did not feel it on account of his heavy felt shoes until it arose above his ankles, and even then he simply pulled up his feet and tucked them under him.

He was bound to catch more fish than Clem, water or no water, and so he watched his float patiently, ready to pull in his line the moment he had a bite.

Clem suddenly felt a strong tremor under him and looked down.

The water was over his ankles and the scow was half full.

"Fo' de land's sake, where de water come from?" he muttered.

Then Yum looked down, and a look of surprise passed over his yellow face.

"How be?" he asked. "Boatee go down, Clemmy no yellee, Yum Bung gettee wet."

"Yes, indeedy, dis yer boat done sink, and I'se blamed ef I see troo it."

Higher and higher the water arose, and Clem laid down his pole and took up one of the oars, so as to paddle ashore.

He could make no progress, however, for the scow remained in the same spot and did not seem to move a foot.

"Clem big fool, no gottee sense," giggled Yum Bung, with his Oriental smile. "Niggah man go crazy."

"Wha' fo' yo' say dat, you headen fellah?" asked Clem, indignantly.

"No pullee up mud-hook, stickee in mud, so be; watee comee up allee same like debil."

"H'm! guess youse right fo' once, bress my soul if yo' isn't," grunted Clem, as he laid down the oar and tugged at the anchor rope.

That only seemed to make them sink deeper, however, and pretty soon Yum Bung cried out:

"Cussee, blazes, watee come in, boatee go down, stickee go off."

By the sticks the Chinaman meant the oars, which now floated away as the water reached the gunwale.

"Fo' de land sakes, we be done drowned suah," gasped Clem, as the water poured in faster than ever.

"Ef yo' knows any pra'rs yo'd bettah say dem pow'ful quick."

"Boatee go bottom, so be?" asked Yum, still smiling and apparently not at all frightened.

"Bet yo' life!" cried Clem, his teeth chattering.

"Dis is de las' ob dis po' niggah. Good-bye, Mistah Chinaman, I'se gwine to glory, sure's yo' bo'n."

The scow now sank rapidly, and Clem thought that all was up with him, not having the sense to swim away, when it suddenly came to a standstill, and ceased to move.

The scow had struck a mud bank, and there stood Clem and the Chinaman up to their necks in the water.

"How be?" asked Yum. "Slow standee still, no slink."

"Bress my soul, I don' understan'," gasped the puzzled Clem.

It was too funny to see those two fishermen standing there in the water making no effort to reach the shore.

It was too much for those quiet twins, who now came swimming down stream as though they had just arrived.

"Hallo, Clem! What are you doing here?" asked Timmy.

"Been in swimming, Yum?" added Jimmy.

"Boy no down; Yum no down, hap," observed the Celestial, a look of intelligence suddenly appearing on his hitherto blank countenance.

"Fo' massy sakes, did yo' come to sabe us?" asked Clem. "What fo' yo' wait so long?"

"Why can't you save yourself?" asked Jimmy.

"And swim out?" added Timmy.

Then they both swam away, and Clem suddenly had an idea.

"Bress me ef I eber tought ob it," he muttered, as he swam toward the bank.

If the boys had not come along there is very little doubt that he would have remained standing there indefinitely.

Yum Bung thought he must do just as Clem did, and he had not moved, therefore, until that laughing moke struck out.

Then he followed suit, and in a few minutes they both stepped out upon the bank, looking like a couple of drowned rats.

"Clemmy big fool!" growled Yum, as he proceeded to peel off his wet garments.

Thereupon that Chinaman, having shot off his mouth, proceeded to wring out and dry his clothes with the natural aptitude of his race for that sort of work.

Having wrung out his blouse, he shook it, but, as Clem stood in front of him and the wind was blowing that way, the coon received a shower-bath right in the face.

"Hi dar, don' yo' shook you' close at me," sputtered Clem.

"Clemmy cussee fool," was all Yum Bung would answer.

That made Clem mad, and he rolled up his wet trousers and soaked them to the heathen right in the jaw.

"Call me fool agin dat's wha' yo' get ebery time," remarked Clem. "I'se talkin' ser'ous, I is, honey, an' don' yo' fo'git it."

Yum sputtered and danced, for the water in Clem's nether garments was none of the cleanest, and some of the mud had got in his eye and made him squint.

"Fo' de land sakes don' do dat," cried Clem, laughing. "Chinamans look crooked nuff to start on, but when dey squints dat's wuss an' mo' ob it."

Then Clem went on with his own toilet, wringing out his things and hanging them on the bushes to dry, sitting down on the grass, meanwhile, to enjoy a regular sun bath.

Presently he heard a loud buzzing just behind him and jumped up as if shot, for in the condition he then was he presented rather too tempting a field for anything of the buzzing species.

"Where dem bees?" he cried, in a frightened whisper. "Ef dey get at me now dey bite me to deff."

The buzzing was now directly in front of him and louder than before, and he backed away in short order.

"Fo' de land's sake, ef dem bees or yaller jackets, or whateber um be, sees me now dey sting me like de ol' scratch."

As he backed away, however, the buzzing sounded right behind him and terror filled his soul.

He made a dive for the bushes where he had hung his clothes, when all at once the buzzing increased in volume and was added to by an ominous rattle.

"Great guns! dere is rattlesnakes an' hornets bofe togeder—sure deff fur sartin. Gorrry! dis liggah don' stay yer no longer."

Seizing his clothes, Clem made one bolt and got away from that locality in short order, thinking it altogether too warm for him.

And when he had decamped, behold those quiet twins come sauntering out from among the bushes where they had been in hiding.

The Chinaman took in the situation at a glance, smiled his child-like and bland smile, and observed:

"Hi-ya, Clemmy big fool. Lillie boy makee buzz, makee lattle, sclare Clemmy likee goose. Gleast fun, so be."

But Clem did not stop to look around until he had gone to what he considered a safe distance, when he sat down on the bank and began hurriedly putting on his rainbow suit.

The boys slyly crept up behind him, and just as he was struggling with his wet shirt set up a terrible buzzing.

Clem thought his enemies, the hornets, had hunted him out, and away he went at a mad gallop, but missing his direction, plumped right over into the river and went to the bottom like a stone.

When he came up he saw the two boys standing on the bank, and looking as innocent as two painted cherubs.

"Did yo' saw dem hornets go fo' dis chile, boys?" he asked.

"Hornets!" said Timmy. "What have you been drinking?"

"Yas, I tol' yo', hornets, an' rattlesnakes, too—more'n a hund'ed of 'em."

"Snakes, eh?" laughed Jimmy; "then that settles it."

"For sure," added Timmy. "Well, cold water is good for you, Clem."

"Ain't done been drinkin' nuffin, sure's yo' bo'n," protested Clem. "Guess I knows when dey's hornets 'round."

Both boys set up a loud buzzing, and Clem ducked under water so quick that it would take away your breath to look at him.

It was comical enough to see that big head, that expansive grin, and those elephantine ears dive under so suddenly, as though some one had pulled a string and yanked him down.

He stayed under water as long as he dared, or



could, and then popped his head up to take a breath and see how the land lay.

Neither the boys nor the hornets were in sight, but just then Yum Bung came waddling along with a grin on him that would have made a cat sick.

"Hi-ya, buzzy-buzzy, lattle-lattle, Clemmy allee same cussee fool," he observed in his elegant English. "Lilly kid makee Clemmy lun likee jackass."

"Don' know what yo' talkin' 'bout, chile," blustered Clem. "Don' yo' s'pose I know wha' I run fo'? Course I does. Didn' I know dey was no ho'nets? Deed I does, all de time."

"Clemmy see gleen in eye?" asked Yum Bung, putting one finger under his eye and shutting the other. "Yum Bung knowee ting or two or tlee; no cussee fool like niggee."

Then he winked and giggled and looked as wise as

her white trash, and not being in favor with Peggy, that hungry coon was obliged to go until supper-time before refreshing his inner man.

This, in the face of seeing the two boys regaling themselves on pie at the housekeeper's invitation, and Yum Bung tucking into fried fish in the back kitchen, was too much for Clem, and he said, in great disgust:

"'Pears to me de col'd pop'lotion don' get deir rights on dis yer plantation. Dere's dem two twin rascals and de Chinymen eatin' to stuff deirselvs, while I'se gwine hungry. Fo' half a dollah I'd go back to ol' Ca'liny."

But how that supper-table did catch it when Clem at last had a good chance to exercise his powers of persuasion upon the edibles!

He began before the others had sat down, and ate until long after all the rest had finished, eating a

rubbed his back. "Might as well go drown myself right away."

"Don't do that, faix, yez might kill the fishes," commented Pat, while Timmy captured the festive goat and led him away.

The next day it rained, and as little or no work could be done out of doors, Clem took himself off to the warm barn and began looking around for a good place to take a nap.

There was a pile of oats over in one corner, and this attracted Clem's attention at once.

"Gorry, dat am jis' de cheese," he remarked with a grin.

Then he dug a hole in the grain, cuddled himself up in a ball, and proceeded to go to sleep in a jiffy after covering himself up so that nothing could be seen of him.



The two boys proceeded to fasten a pack of fire-crackers to each pair of dangling coat-tails. Clem and the Chinaman were especially favored, but everybody had something. There was lots of fun in store for that row of spectators, but not of the kind that they anticipated.

an owl and chuckled again, which was too much for Clem, now climbing out upon the bank.

"Guess de col'd folks knows as much as de Chinymens," he muttered. "Col'd folks don' eat rats, no-how, an' dey b'longs to de chu'ch. G'long, chile, youse no account 'tail."

Then he continued his dressing, an operation which had met with many interruptions, while Yum trotted off by himself, there being a coolness now between him and Clem.

When that laughing moke reached home the story of his misfortunes seemed to have got there ahead of him, and one and all began joking him about it.

"Sure yez run so fast from the bees that yez sweat your shirt."

"Been practicing charming rattlesnakes, I hear, Clem?"

"How long will a boat stay above water with the plug out?"

"How many fish did you bring home, old Fat-sides?"

Clem looked around as disdainfully as that comical mug of his would permit, and at last answered with ineffable scorn:

"G'way, white folks. I don' 'sociate wid sich trash. Drefful smart an' peart, ain't youse? I ain't got nuffin' to say to sech no 'count rubbish as youse. You am beneaf me."

Then he walked off in solitary grandeur to change his clothes and skirmish around after some hash, having had nothing to eat since morning, the basket of lunch having gone down with the boat to the bottom of the river.

However, having offended Mrs. Roriarity by calling

clean swath all around him, and making everybody wonder where he could put it all.

"Reckon yo' don' make nuffin' lettin' dis col'd gemman go ober one meal," he remarked, as he shifted his seat so as to cover fresh territory, the region within reach of him looking like a wilderness after a storm has passed.

"Guess you'll have breakfast in the morning, Clem Brown," declared Peggy, beginning to clear away the dishes.

"Wall, I reckon I'll be dar, honey, when de bell rings. I'se makin' up for los' time. I is."

"Faix, I thought ye was fattening a pig for the show," said Pat Malone.

"Rig a derrick an' hoist the naygar from his chair. Sure he'll niver be able to get up himself," said Mrs. Roriarity.

"Guess you folks neber see me eat when I'se rale hungry," said Clem.

"Niggy man bust, so be, bleakee bench," chattered Yum Bung, taking in all the fun.

"G'long, big fool Chinaman, yo' kean't cotch fish fo' a cent," snorted Clem, getting up only because there was nothing more for him to eat.

"Hi-ya! Clemmy catchee bee, duckee in um watee," laughed Yum, and that set all hands off again, and Clem was glad to escape.

He was not free from trouble even then, for, as he came rushing out in a very belligerent attitude, one of those two goats, already spoken of, taking this as a personal affront, charged full tilt at the excited darky and sent him flying.

"Fo' de land sakes, dere's no peace for dis po' col'd man, nohow!" muttered Clem, as he got up and

Shortly after that Mr. Nettlebone came into the barn with Pat and one or two of the men, and said:

"Boys, there's those oats that want to be threshed. I guess this will be as good a time as any to do it."

The men took down two or three long-handled flails from the wall, rolled up their sleeves, and got to work.

Now, that particular bed that Clem had chosen happened to be among the ripe grain instead of straw, as he thought, and consequently there was a nice little surprise in store for him.

"Put in the licks, boys," said old Peter. "There's a big bunch right there, and it'll need thinning."

"Let her have it," cried Pat.

Whack, whack, whack!

How the flails did come down on that mass of grain, and how the dust did fly.

Clem was in the midst of the pleasantest kinds o' dreams of coon hunts, moonlight frolics, dancing in the barn, and all that, when he suddenly dreamed that he had fallen out of a tree and landed plump on his head.

Then he thought that a dozen able-bodied Billy goats were bucking him for all they were worth, while he was constantly falling over a heap of stones.

Then, of a sudden, he became aware that there was no dream about it, but stern reality.

A whack on the funny bone made him jump and yell out as if he had been thrown down-stairs.

"Hallo, dar, what all dat poundin' about?" he yelled.

Then the threshers were surprised to see the pile of grain bulge up in the middle, and the head and shoulders of that laughing moke appear before them,



They dropped their flails and stared at him in unbounded amazement.

"Why, Clem, what does this mean?" asked Mr. Nettlebone in surprise.

"Dat's wha' I want know, sah. Dere neber was a mo' to'mented niggah in de hull wo'ld dan I is."

"But what were you doing among the oats?"

"Nuffin 't all."

"How came you there?"

"Dunno. Specs I mus' ha' dropped down dere an' fell asleep."

"Well," said old Peter with a laugh, "the barn is not the place, nor the morning the time, for you to go to sleep. You're getting lazy, Clem."

"Deed I isn't, sah. Dere isn't a harder wo'kin' man than me on de hull plantation. I gib yo' my wo'd fo' dat."

"Well, you are not appreciated here, and you'd better find a job somewhere else."

"Does yo' sack me, boss?"

"Yes."

Poor Clem went away with a sad heart, muttering to himself:

"Dat's jess my luck. I neber has a soft snap but I goes an' loses um."

## CHAPTER XII.

POOR Clem thought that he was dismissed from Mr. Nettlebone's service, and he went away with a heavy heart to pack up the few odds that belonged to him and look for another place.

Old Peter had no intention of sending him away, however, merely desiring to frighten him a little and see if he could not get at least the price of his board out of him in work, to say nothing of a return for the liberal wages he paid him.

On his way to the house from the barn Clem met those quiet twins, and they, noticing his lugubrious expression of countenance, wished to know the cause thereof.

"What makes you look so glum?" asked Timmy.

"Lost your grip or seen a ghost?" added Jimmy.

"I done los' my place, chillen," said Clem, grinning in spite of himself, and yet having an unmistakable sadness in his voice.

"Lost your place?" cried both boys, in a breath.

"Yas, chillen, de boss done gib me de sack."

"Fired out?"

"Yas, sah, done been bounced clean out ob de shop."

"Well, that's too bad!"

"It's a real shame!"

"Such a hard-working, industrious man as you are!"

"And so good-natured and obliging, and ready for all sorts of work!"

"I'se done broke my heart ober losin' yo', chillen, but de bes' of frien's mus' part."

"You shan't go!" cried Jimmy.

"We'll hire you ourselves," put in Timmy.

"Does yo' tink de boss 'll let yo', chillen?" asked Clem, seeing a ray of hope in the gloomy prospect.

"You just go about your work and say nothing," said Timmy.

"And we'll fix the dear old man, and keep you here," chimed in Jimmy.

Then Clem shuffled away to find some excuse for working, while the boys went arm-in-arm to the barn to find Uncle Peter.

He was just coming out of the barn, looking the very picture of benevolence, when they both braced him, one on each side.

"Oh, Uncle Peter, you won't send Clem away, will you?"

"There won't be any more fun for us if you do."

"We won't stay here."

"But will go back to New York."

"Why, what's the matter with you two little chaps?" asked the old man.

"Aren't you going to send poor Clem Brown away?"

"I haven't the first idea of doing so."

"But he said you had."

"Why, you young rascals," and old Peter laughed as he pinched them on the cheeks, "that was just to frighten him a bit and make him work."

"Was that all?"

"Only a joke?"

"Certainly."

"Oh, I'm so glad!"

"That's bully!"

"You don't suppose you are the only ones that can play off jokes, do you?" chuckled the kind old man, with a merry twinkle in his eye.

"Well, we didn't think you'd send poor Clem away, anyhow."

"Of course not, nor anything or anybody that you two jolly boys want."

"Uncle Peter, you're a trump!"

"A regular, first-class brick!"

"There, there, it's all settled. So run away, like good boys, for I have business to attend to," said Mr. Nettlebone, and, slapping them on the backs, he went away laughing, while the twins hurried off to tell the good news to Clem.

They could not resist having a little fun at his expense, however, and so, when they found him, they began to scold him for his laziness.

"Uncle Peter says you eat more than you earn," began Jimmy.

"And that you keep the rest from their work," put in Timmy.

"You're a lazy——"

"Good-for-nothing——"

"Careless——"

"Nig!"

"Den I s'pose I'se got to go, chillen?" asked Clem, sorrowfully.

"Yes."

"Couldn't yo' do nuffin' fo' me?"

"Not a thing."

"Kin I stay to dinna?"

"No, you must leave now."

"In all dis rain?"

"Yes."

"Why, I spoils my complexion, suah."

That was too much, and both boys broke into a merry laugh.

Something in its tones told Clem that things were not as bad for him as they had been trying to make out, and he asked, more cheerfully:

"Isn't yo' foolin' dis col'd man, chillen?"

"Get to work, Clem, and it will be all right," said Timmy.

"But if you don't do your level best," continued Jimmy, "we'll have to discharge you."

"What? You two chillen discharge dis niggah?"

"That's the talk. We've got the hiring of you now, and you'll have to stand around."

"Sho! dat am de wust! Two chillen hab all de say ober a man w'at's as big as fo' ob dem."

"We're giving it to you straight, Clem, so mind your eye, or you'll get the grand bounce."

"Fo' de land sakes! dat do beat slavery days all holler."

However, he was not to be discharged, and that was something, and he reckoned he could wheedle the boys into letting him do about as he liked.

Things went on about as usual for some days, and at last the anniversary of the nation's birthday, the glorious Fourth of July, was at hand, and great preparations were being made in the village to give it a fitting celebration.

There was to be a race in the morning, a game of base-ball in the afternoon, fireworks in the evening, while an oration, a picnic, an illumination, and fun generally were to be sandwiched in throughout the day and night, wherever there was a good chance to get them in.

Mr. Nettlebone being decidedly patriotic, and wishing to give the twins all the fun they wanted, determined to observe the day in grand style, and for three or four days before the Fourth packages of all sorts and sizes kept arriving by express, all directed to him and presumably containing fireworks and other things necessary for the proper celebration of the day.

The boys were all anxiety, for while their uncle had told them that he intended them to have a good time, he did not say in what manner they were to have it, and they were eager for the numerous packages to be opened.

And at last, on the afternoon of the third, Mr. Nettlebone called Pat and the boys into one of the unoccupied rooms of the great house, where the good-natured Irishman proceeded to unpack under his master's directions.

First there were packs of crackers, little and big, for Mr. Nettlebone recognized the undisputed right and prerogative of every loyal American boy to make all the noise possible upon the anniversary of the independence of his country.

After the crackers there were other noise-producing articles, a brass cannon, with no end of gunpowder, torpedoes of all sizes, and Chinese bombs warranted to be heard five miles.

All sorts of fireworks for the evening display followed, and two of the men were at that very time busied erecting frames and poles out on the lawn, beyond the trees, for their most advantageous display.

There were tons, almost, of colored fires for beautifying the grounds with their varied lights, fire balloons which would send off fireworks as they ascended the heavens, and everything else which would make a noise and paint the sky all sorts of gorgeous colors.

"There you are, boys," said the old man, when the packages were all opened; "go in and enjoy yourselves, but don't get hurt."

First of all, that evening, when it was dark enough, the grounds were illuminated by the colored fires, pans of which were placed on the walks here and there and set fire to, the effect when all were ablaze being most picturesque.

The trees were red, blue, orange and white, as the different lights fell upon them, the little fountain before the house seemed like a veritable cascade of jewels, and the house itself like some gorgeous palace reared at the command of some mighty genie of legendary frame.

"Bress my soul, ef dat ain't as near to heaven as I eber was, den I won't say so, chillen."

It was Clem Brown, who, lost in admiration at the beautiful sight, uttered these words as he stood on the lawn and took it all in.

Bang!

Suddenly there was a tremendous report, a shower of sparks and a puff of smoke, and Clem jumped nearly ten feet.

"G'way, dar, wid dem little crackers," he cried, half scared out of his wits. "Does yo' want to blow dis niggah clean to heaben afo' his time?"

He did not doubt that the boys had thrown that giant cracker behind him, but suddenly the fires went out, leaving all the grounds in profound darkness, all the blacker for the brilliancy which had just preceded it.

"Sakes alibe! I can't see nuffin'," ejaculated the poor coon, and then there was another explosion right over his head, and he stood spell bound.

Looking up, he saw a single ball of fire shoot up into the air to a surprising height, and then suddenly burst and fill all the air with a shower of stars of every color imaginable.

"Goodness sakes! dey's fallin' on me! Dis niggah be burned up fo' shuah!"

With that the terrified Clem made a dash for the

house, never having seen such a sight before, and fancying that the end of the world had come.

However, there were no more exhibitions that night, as it was only intended to give a mere foretaste of what might be expected the next night, and Clem presently discovered that he was still safe.

Before long the house was dark and silent, and for some hours not a sound disturbed the stillness, save those which may always be heard upon a perfect summer night such as this was.

The plashing of the fountain, the rustling of the trees, the gentle sighing of the night wind, the voices of myriads of insects, the croaking of frogs, the cry of some night bird, these were all the sounds to be heard, and all the house seemed wrapped in slumber.

At the first peep of day, however, Yum Bung was suddenly awakened—jumping out of bed by the suddenness of the surprise—by the discharge of a cannon right under his window.

"How do?" he yelled, hardly knowing what to say, as he stuck his head out of the window and saw nothing but a cloud of smoke.

At the same time Clem, asleep in another wing of the house, was awakened by a terrible clatter as though a dozen big cannon crackers were going off in rapid succession right under his bed.

He sprang up in a fright, but soon discovered that the noise was outside and that he had not been blown up as he supposed.

"Fo' de land sakes, ef I didn' fink de end ob de worl' had come," he muttered, when suddenly a big red cracker flew past his head as he stuck it out, and exploded with a bang.

In went that woolly head like lightning, and down went the window with a force that made the glass rattle, while Clem gave vent to his indignation thus:

"Oh, yas, dem quiet boys is up, dem nice, inner-cent, gentle little kids, dem deah little lambs is arose, an' I specs dis chile 'll get Hail Columby 'om 'em all de day long. Ef dey was two mo' sech innercents 'round de place 'twould be a first-class lunatic 'sylum in jes' 'bout t'ree hours an' a half."

Yum Bung had heard the racket in the other wing, and had popped out his pig-tailed head to see what it all meant, when bang went that brass cannon right under his nose for the second time.

He fell over backwards, upset his washstand and had a free bath all in the space of five seconds, but when he looked out again not a soul was to be seen.

"Cussie, noise likee debil, no gettee snooze," he muttered, and he was right in that particular, for there was no more rest for him or Clem that day.

He and the moke met at the back door a few minutes later, and each accused the other of waking him up.

"Clemmy no good, settee clacker off, makee noise, Yum Bung no catchee sleep, punchee head."

"Look yer, Pig-tail, if you are so fresh wif your racket so early in de mo'ning, I broke yo' jaw, yas, indeedy."

"Niggee talkee big, so be, allee samee flaid."

"Who is? Is dis chile 'fraid ob youse?"

"So be, belly much flaid."

Clem at once proceeded to show how much afraid he was by yanking Yum's queue, but while the two lovers were in the midst of their little scene, along came Mrs. Roriaty with a pail of water, which she doused over both of them, giving each as good a ducking as the other.

"Ilish ooman too cussee flesh," whined Yum, as he trotted off.

"Don' wanter stay in sich a country as dis, where de niggahs ain't got no rights 't all," sputtered Clem, and he too made himself scarce.

During the forenoon Clem went to the village to see the races, several crack trotters being arrayed against each other, and the excitement running high among the country folk.

Clem looked over the horses, and, knowing something about such matters, decided at once upon the winner, and decided to back him for all he was worth.

The horses started, and a big, lanky countryman standing near Clem shouted out:

"Who wants tu bet agin Dandy Jim? My name's Si Perkins, b'gosh, an' I'll back my 'pinion for dollars, I will."

"Is Dandy Jim de black stallion, boss?" asked Clem of Si Perkins.

"Yas, siree, Dandy Jim is the black stallion, an' he's bound to win."

Now Clem had fixed his choice on a gray mare, whose name was Kitty, as he learned, and he said, quietly:

"What'll ye gib me agin' Kitty, boss?"

"What? Agen that 'ere mare? Five to one on Dandy Jim agen the field, or any on 'em. Put up or shut up."

"I'll take a dollah's wuff ob dat, boss."

"Sho! I ain't bettin' sich low figgers as them."

"Bet him high, cooney," said a sporting man behind Clem, "and I'll go halves with yer."

"How much sugar yo' put on um?" asked Clem, turning half around.

"Fifty dollars."

"Bet yo' fifty dollahs eben, Mistah Perkins, dat Kitty win de race."

Mr. Perkins wanted to back out, now that Clem was willing to bet, but that laughing moke finally pinned him down to a ten-dollar bet, even money, on Dandy Jim against the gray mare.

The money was put in the hands of a bystander, and the race was watched with eager interest.

Kitty won by two lengths, Dandy Jim being a bad third, and Clem's judgment was proven to have been correct.

The sporting man was about to claim the whole of the stakes, but Clem was no fool in racing matters,



though he might be in other things, and he froze on to the cash like a little man.

"Half ob dat's mine, bossy, an' don' yo' disremember it," he grinned, as he counted out ten dollars and stuffed them in his pocket.

"What's de reason, hey?" said the sport, with a swagger. "I was to give yer a case for der straight tip, and dat's all, an' 'f yer gives me any of yer lip I'll slug yer in der teeth."

"Wall, yo' looks like sluggin' dis yer chile," snorted Clem, as he drew himself up to his full height. "G'way, boy, else I fall on youse an' knock de win' out ob youse."

The sport saw that bluster would do good here, as Clem appeared to have plenty of friends, and, fearing to lose all if he made too much fuss, he took the ten dollars that Clem offered him, and went off to look for a flat.

bet a hundred to all you've made that you won't do that again. There's a square offer for you."

But Clem was up to snuff, and, tucking the plunder into the sub-cellar of his boots, answered with a wink:

"Dis chile knows when he hab got enuff, boss. Good-mo'nin', sah."

And off he went, leaving the swindlers to whistle for their money, or make up their losses upon some one less sharp than Clem Brown.

Clem had a good head on him for some things, and he got home and put that money away at once, so that he should not spend it, as he knew that he certainly would if he kept it about him.

By this time it was the usual dinner hour for the servants, and our colored brother washed up and went in with the rest when the gong sounded.

"I didn' see yo' dis mo'nin'," he said, to Yum

"Yon told me to keep on counting, and I did, and there were twenty passed in. Two dollars, please."

"Guess I'll let dem fin' der own preserved seats," muttered Clem, as he planked down his two dollars and followed his flock.

There were no standing places to be had, and so Clem and his tribe perched themselves on top of the fence, resting their feet on the cross-piece and taking in the game from that point of vantage.

It was in progress, and they were watching it with eager interest, Clem having bet on the village boys, when along came those quiet twins.

Outside the inclosure, however, not inside, for they were looking for fun, and cared nothing for base-ball.

"Look at the roosters," said Jimmy, pointing to the backs above them, all that could be seen of the party.

"Let's have some fun," laughed Timmy, and the



The very moment those hidden infernal machines began to go off, that moment, with remarkable and surprising unanimity, the whole gang pitched head foremost off the fence.

"I'se five dollahs bettah off den I would be ef he hadn't er kicked," chuckled Clem, "but dat's allus de way w'en a fellah gits too graspin'."

However, the sport was laying for him, and he instructed a friend of his who was running a three card monte game to look out for the big coon and skin him.

Clem presently came upon the game, which was nothing new to him, as he had often bucked against it, successfully down in South Carolina.

All darkies are natural gamblers, and as Clem was no exception to the rule, he presently became interested, and stepping up, said with his expansive grin: "Gib me a dollah's wuf ob dat, boss. I bet you'se I cotch de picter kyard ebery lick."

The sharp thought he had the coon dead to rights and let him win as he thought, so as to tempt him to higher stakes.

"Bet you two dollars you can't do that again," he said.

"I'se wif yo', boss."

The cards were shuffled, and Clem beat the game a second time.

"Make it something worth while," said the sharp. "I'll bet you twenty dollars you won't pick out the picture this time."

"It's a go, boss."

This time the fellow thought he had the laughing make, and he put in all his fine touches, but Clem was too quick for him, and picked out the card again and collared the money.

"Come, now," said the gambler, who was getting desperate, and now gave the wink to his pals, "I'll

Bung. "Did yo' hurt yo'se'f? Yo' looks kin' o' frien'less."

"Cussee luckee, loseee tlee dollee on pokee, tlee cardee," chattered Yum, dolefully.

"Yo' don' say?" laughed Clem. "Don' yo' tech dem t'ings, chile. Yo' ain't got spo'tin' blood in youse. I'se de chile to catch de shug; hauled in more'n fo'ty dollahs dis mo'nin'."

"Begorry, then yez had ought to thrate the crowd," observed Pat.

"Tell yo' what I do," answered Clem, shoveling in the meat and vegetables by the load. "I'se took de hull crowd to de ball match dis aftahnoon. I'se neber see one ob dem, an' dere ain't nuffin' mean 'bout me, if I is brack."

Clem was voted a brick forthwith, and they were all ready to be his friends as long as his money lasted, and promised to abstain from all jokes at his expense.

After dinner the whole gang of them started off, bound for the ball ground, under Clem's patronage.

The ground was inclosed by a high board fence, and the crowd had to pass by a ticket-seller's window and through a turnstile before entering the inclosure.

"Pass right in, chillen," said Clem, marshaling his clan. "Jess yo' keep 'count ob dem, boss."

The gang passed through, but three or four boys and the same number of strange colored ladies managed to get themselves included before Clem could call a halt.

"Twenty tickets, two dollars; five of you want reserved seats."

"Twenty tickets! Fo' de land sakes, dat's mo' dan all ob us togeder. Does yo' count Chinamen extra?"

two boys proceeded to fasten a pack of fire-crackers to each pair of dangling coat-tails.

Clem and the Chinaman were especially favored, but everybody had something.

"Now, then," whispered Timmy, passing two pieces of lighted punk to his brother, "let's fire the mine."

There was lots of fun in store for that row of spectators, but not of the kind that they anticipated.

#### CHAPTER XIII.

Two merry boys behind a fence and a row of interested spectators to a ball match on top of it.

Several packs of fire-crackers hanging to the coat-tails of the lookers-on, and all alight and ready to go off.

That is the first scene in the great farce-drama now being enacted for the benefit of our readers.

First a sputtering, then a hissing, next an awful din, and lastly a magic transformation scene.

This is the interlude.

Then two small boys rapidly running away from a high board fence, above which is a view of flying explosives, smoke and flame, and below an undercurrent of strong language.

This is scene the second in the farce, Timmy and Jimmy Bing, stage managers.

The row of spectators disappeared as if by magic, and in its place a lot of flying crackers, while the boys made all haste to evacuate the locality.

The very moment those hidden infernal machines began to go off, that moment, with remarkable and surprising unanimity, the whole gang pitched head foremost off the fence.



Only the fence and a lot of bursting Chinese devices remained in sight, even the boys concluding that the weather had moderated too suddenly for comfort.

Interesting as the game of ball had been to Clem, Yum Bung and the others, they were more interested just then in getting off that fence.

The crackers had something to do with helping them off, and in keeping them running as well for some little time.

Clem rolled over in the dirt and put his crackers out, and then he stood and watched the antics of the others.

"Fo' de land sakes, see dem feilahs jump!" he snorted, slapping his leg. "Beats all de circus I eber seed."

Just then, however, a big cracker which had been smoldering at the tail of his coat went off with a hurrah.

It propelled that hilarious coon to a distance of ten feet, and knocked all the fun clean out of him.

If he had been caressed by the hind hoof of a mule he could not have been more spasmodic in his movements.

"Fo' massy sakes! wha' dat?" he ejaculated. "I tort dey was all burned out—'deed I did."

Not wishing to have any more such pleasant surprises, Clem took off his coat, examined it, and then walked off to find his friends.

He saw them sitting on the fence in another part of the field, and he at once started out to join them.

Of course he could not go around as any one else would do, but must needs cross right among the players.

"Hi! get out of the way there, you big fool nigger!" yelled the umpire.

The pitcher, who had turned about to deliver a ball, and so did not see Clem, now whisked around and sent in a hot one with all his might.

Now Clem was squarely in range of the missile, and as the umpire spoke he turned and faced him, the better to hear what was said.

"Was you spokin' to me, boss? Well, you'd bettab be moah respectable, 'case I don' like—"

Bliff—bang!

Something whanged against Clem's person a little below the base of the spinal column, that made a noise heard all over the field.

It was the ball, and it had come waltzing and curving along with no gentle force.

Clem jumped about, clapped his hands behind him, and then look around to see what had been fooling with him.

A shout from the spectators, who were highly amused at this little incident, brought him to his senses.

"Get off the field!"

"Give him another to straighten him out!"

"Let him have it in the head. It won't hurt him!"

"Wear him for a chest protector!"

"Fire him off the diamond!"

Clem looked around, took in the situation, and muttered:

"Guess I mus' be in de way. Why don' dey say so at fus'?"

Then he limped off and presently joined Yum Bung on the fence, the Celestial being highly amused at his friend's adventures.

"Hi-ya, Clemmy heap big, jackey ass fool," he chuckled. "No sabe not'ing."

Clem paid no attention to these flippant remarks, but gave all his time to the game.

"Gorry! how dat fellah run!" he exclaimed. "Guess he mus' ha' been struck by lightnin'."

Presently a well hit ball came sailing along, straight for the fence, and just high enough to make things lively for the roosters on the top of it.

All at Clem had the good sense to drop off when they saw it coming, but he was too much engaged in watching a man running to pay any attention to such a little thing as a flying ball.

Somebody yelled and then he saw his danger.

Giving a regular war whoop, he tumbled backwards off that fence so quick that his wool lost its kink.

He turned about fifty revolutions to the minute before he stopped rolling, having lighted on the brink of a hill just outside the fence.

Over and over he went like a human ball, fetching up at last at the bottom, the most used up coon in the town.

"Guess I don' wantee see no mo' ball games," he muttered, as he pulled himself together and started for home.

When he reached the house he found everything all shut up tight, as all hands had gone off to see the fun, and would not be back for some time.

Having nothing to do, therefore, Clem sat down under the shade of a tree, braced himself against the trunk, and deliberately went to sleep.

He had been sojourning in the land of nod for about half an hour, when along came those quiet twins looking for something to do.

They espied the sleeping beauty under the tree, and at once and without hesitation decided to put up a job on him.

"Let's have some fun," said Timmy.

"With the laughing moke," added Jimmy.

"Just get on to his grin."

"More widespread than ever."

Clem invariably slept with his mouth open as though he were setting a trap for flies, and the cavern now yawned as usual, increasing the comical expression always worn by our colored friend.

"Clemmy wants a cracker," laughed Timmy, pointing to the cavity in the middle of the coon's face.

"And he shall have it, poor dear," responded Jimmy, with a wink.

The cracker which that undemonstrative young imp

produced was of the explosive variety, and was nearly two inches in diameter, and wore a red jacket.

The laughing youth inserted the butt end of this adolescent infernal machine in Clem's mouth, and forthwith proceeded to light the fuse.

It sizzled and sputtered, and a line of fire crept rapidly up toward the business office of the cracker, evidently bent on making things lively for the moke.

Clem's mouth was pretty big, to be sure, but it would not stand stretching for any great length of time unless distended by grub.

The sleeping ducky began to choke, and this caused the cracker to fall out of his mouth into his lap, and very fortunate for him was it that things happened thusly.

He was just beginning to breathe freely once more, and was about to indulge in a snore, when the fire and the powder in the middle of the cracker came together.

There was an instant collision, and the true inwardness of that cracker was turned out of house and home in less time than a chicken takes to sneeze.

Up jumped Clem, banging that hard cocoanut of his against the tree, and chipping off a great piece of the bark.

"Fo' de Lawd! wha' dat?" he interrogated of no one in particular, for he was the sole tenant of the adjacent region.

Those quiet twins had emulated the example of the Arabs and had silently stolen away without having even taken the trouble to fold their tents like the aforesaid Oriental tramps.

"Who put dat cannon in my pocket?" demanded Clem, looking all around. "Dem t'ings allus gwine off, 'pears to me."

However, there was no satisfactory answer to the question, and Clem proceeded to put himself out, some of the burning fragments having begun to set fire to his trousers.

"Wish de Fo' ob July hadn't neber been diskivered," he ejaculated, as he walked off, his optics roving around in quest of somebody to accuse of this newest bit of practical hilarity.

But the house and grounds appeared deserted, and Clem found another tree under which to continue his slumbers, having little doubt, however, that they would soon be disturbed.

"Let him sleep," said Timmy, a few minutes afterward, when the twins came across the slumbering African. "He'll keep till the next time, and there's no use of wasting all the fun on him at one lick."

So Clem was left to finish his nap.

By that time Mrs. Roriarly had returned, and the boys discussed piety with her, at the end of which pleasant amusement Yum Bung came waddling along more unsteadily than ever.

"Look at that heathen," said Timmy. "He's been drinking, I'll bet a cent."

"Double your stake," laughed Jimmy. "You've got a sure thing."

"Faix, a sober Chinayser is bad enough," muttered the housekeeper, in disgust, "but I've no use at all for a dhrunken wan."

"Houp lai! Yum go on lacket, get dlunk allee same Melican man," shouted the Celestial, as he staggered up. "Been on splee, dlink cockee-tail, gin slingee, blandy stlaight all samee one o' boys. Whoop!"

Then he posted himself up against a tree, his hat over his eyes, his toes turned in and his legs spread apart, a very good specimen of broken China.

"Begorra! if the masher sees him lukin' the loikes av that he'll discharge him," observed Mrs. Roriarly.

"Let's sober him up," said Timmy.

"Right you are," added his brother and companion, in guilt. "But just wait a minute."

Then he ran off to the little shop where the twins manufactured their mechanical devices, presently returning with a hammer and a spike.

Picking up the end of Yum Bung's dangling pig-tail, the boy proceeded to spike it to the tree with neatness and dispatch.

"Come in!" said Yum at the first blow of the hammer. "Noder one o' boys. Hab dlunk 'long o' me. Settee up allee same splort."

"Drive her home," cackled Timmy, and Jimmy drove the spike in up to the head, pinning the pig-tail fast.

Then the two jokers ran off and got a couple of buckets of water, and set them down near the tree.

"Let's wake him up first," suggested Jimmy, putting a pack of fire-crackers in each of the side-pockets of Yum's blouse and touching them off.

There was a tremendous snapping and cracking in about two seconds, and the Chinaman woke up and made a bolt for freedom.

He got as far as his pig-tail would reach, and then fetched up with a round turn that nearly took him off his feet.

"Cussee, blazes!" he ejaculated. "Phggee-tail dlunk, fi'-clackee go bang. Yumee allee bloke up!"

He tried to get away, but the spike held fast, and the crackers made him dance a most fantastic jig.

"Be heavens, I haven't had so much fun since Pat-sy's wake," laughed the jolly housekeeper.

"Put him out," said Jimmy.

"Enough said," responded Timmy.

Then the twins seized the buckets of water and treated that jumping-jack of a Chinaman to a second edition of the deluge.

The incipient conflagration set on foot by the crackers was cut off in the bloom of its youth, but that did not suit his Celestial highness for a sapeck.

If the fire had made him dance, the water made him jump, and for a time the air was blue with Chinese imprecations uttered in choicest Mongolian un-mixed with pigeon or any other sort of English.

He was certainly sober now, but he could not understand what held him to the tree, and the more he tugged the more he yelled.

It was nip and tuck between spike and queue, and neither seemed disposed to yield a single point.

The boys and the housekeeper enjoyed the circus. Clem woke up and came along to take in the fun, Pat and his coadjutors arrived from town, and they too participated in the amusement of the hour.

At last the strands of the pig-tail loosened, a tuft of hair the size of a rabbit's tail parted company with the rest of Yum's hirsute appendage, and the Chinaman flew away from the tree as if fired from a cannon.

The spike held its own, however, retaining the tuft of hair as a trophy of victory.

"Melican boy blame fool," were the last words heard from Yum Bung as he retired, thoroughly sobered, to dress for supper.

At this meal, it being a holiday occasion, ice-cream was served with the dessert, and all hands enjoyed the refreshing delicacy.

All except Yum Bung, who did not know what it was, but who thought it must be something good, because all the rest, even Clem, seemed to enjoy it so much.

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"Wha' kin' ob puddin' does yo' call dis?" asked the coon, shoveling it into his capacious mouth.

"Faix, don't yez know what cram is?" asked Pat.

"Is dis cream? Was de cow froze to deff when she war milked?"

There was a laugh at this, and Yum Bung, who did not wish to display his ignorance and be laughed at, bolted a huge mouthful and swallowed it without further ado.

Then he jumped up, rubbed his stomach, and began to dance around, exclaiming:

"Hi—ya! plenty cold glub, no cookee nuff, fleeze belly allee same like ice wagon."

The laugh that followed this remarkable comment on the cook's ability drove the Chinaman from the room, while Clem remarked:

"Tol' yo' what, chillen, de nex' time yo' hab dat kin' ob puddin', yo'd bettah wa'm him up, else dis coon freeze clean froo to de bench."

"It's aisy to see that yez are not accustomed to lux'ries be the way yez act," said Pat, with an extra turn up to his pug nose, "but if I was ye, I wudn't display me ignorance so plainly."

"H'm! Irishers is bringed up on sour milk, 'stead ob cream," snorted Clem. "Yo' kean't tol' me nuffin 'bout dat, honey, 'cause I've seed 'em raised. Niggahs is mo' 'count in de Souf dan Irishers."

The laugh was on Pat, but he was good-natured enough not to get mad, and soon afterward the party adjourned to the lawn to enjoy the surprises prepared for the wind up of the day's celebration.

When darkness had settled down the grounds were illuminated with colored fires, and then the heavens were made brilliant with many-colored rockets, golden sheaves, floating stars, fire balloons, and other devices known to the pyrotechnic art.

Mines, candles, flower-pots, wheels of all kinds and set pieces of great beauty and brilliancy were set off in rapid succession, the delight of the beholders knowing no bounds.

The twins were as happy as larks over the display, and their pleasure increased that of their kind old uncle, who would spare nothing in order to contribute to their enjoyment.

At last came the last and crowning feature of the evening's amusement—the release of the monster fire-balloon filled with fireworks, which went off as the balloon ascended.

It was a tremendous affair, fully twenty feet in diameter, and strong enough, when inflated, to pull a boy off his feet, although made of light tissue paper only.

The men from the vineyard were to set this loose, but Yum Bung, full of curiosity to know all that was going on, forced himself into the inclosure and took an active part in the proceedings.

The balloon was inflated, and as it began to swell it tugged at the cords which held it down as though eager to soar away into the highest heavens.

Being lighted from the inside, it presented a most gorgeous appearance, and to Yum Bung looked like some big dragon, so dear to all Chinese hearts.

"Hi-ya! allee same like China," he muttered, pressing forward, the memories of the Feast of Lanterns being fresh in his mind.

"Stand by!" cried one of the men, lighting the fuses of the rockets.

"Cut away!" cried another, letting go the ropes.

Just as Yum pressed forward to look into the car of the balloon he tripped over one of the ropes and fell right across the car.

"Bress my stahs, look at dat big fool Chinaman," shouted Clem.

Young Bung's position was anything but a comfortable or enviable one.

The balloon started to go up, but was held down by his weight.

"Get off," yelled Mr. Joy, pulling at Yum's pig-tail.

Yum jumped up and tried to get away just as the fireworks began to go off.

A big sky-rocket went tearing up his back and through his coat, and, carrying off his hat, started with it on a trip to the moon.

That Chinaman was pretty well scared, and made a break from the spot.

His foot got tangled up in the last rope that held the balloon just as some one cut it loose.

Over he went flat on his back, while the balloon gave a bound and started heavenward.

It got up just high enough to stand Yum Bung on his head, and then stopped.

The Chinaman was not very big, but the balloon was too tired to think of carrying him up with it into the realms of space.

So it kept him bobbing about, yelling and shrieking



trying to get loose, and all the time the fireworks were beginning to go off from the bottom and sides of the car.

"Cut him away, somebody!" shouted Timmy. "He'll spoil the whole show!"

Mr. Joy ran in, and grabbing the Chinaman's leg, tore off the two-story shoe that graced its extremity.

Down went Yum Bung on his back, scared to death, and up went the balloon, taking the shoe with it on the end of a rope.

"Gorry, dat am a nice t'ing to take up in de sky," laughed Clem. "Wha' dey do wif dat ol' shoe up in de heabens?"

"Faix, I've often h'ard a Chinayser called a Celestial," laughed Pat. "but I niver thought his shoe wud be wan av the heavenly bodies."

Up went the balloon, a mass of light and color, and now the rockets and candles began to shoot out from

Their clothes were in a sad condition, however, and could only be mended by their having entirely new outfits.

"Tol' yo' what we do," said Clem. "We'll go to de city, see de sights an' buy some new close."

"Gettee fixee up, allee samee dude?" chuckled Yum Bung.

"Dat's de ticket. I'se got money, chile, an' I don' car' fo' de expense."

"Yum gottee cash," smiled the Celestial; "buy new suitee allee samee Melican man; no likee petticoat."

"Dat's right, make a cibilized man ob yo'se'f."

"Bettee life, Yum makee boss dude, allee samee one o' boys."

"Yas siree, sir, yo' look boss, ef yo' got de price ob de fixin's. You'se got any money, Chinaman?"

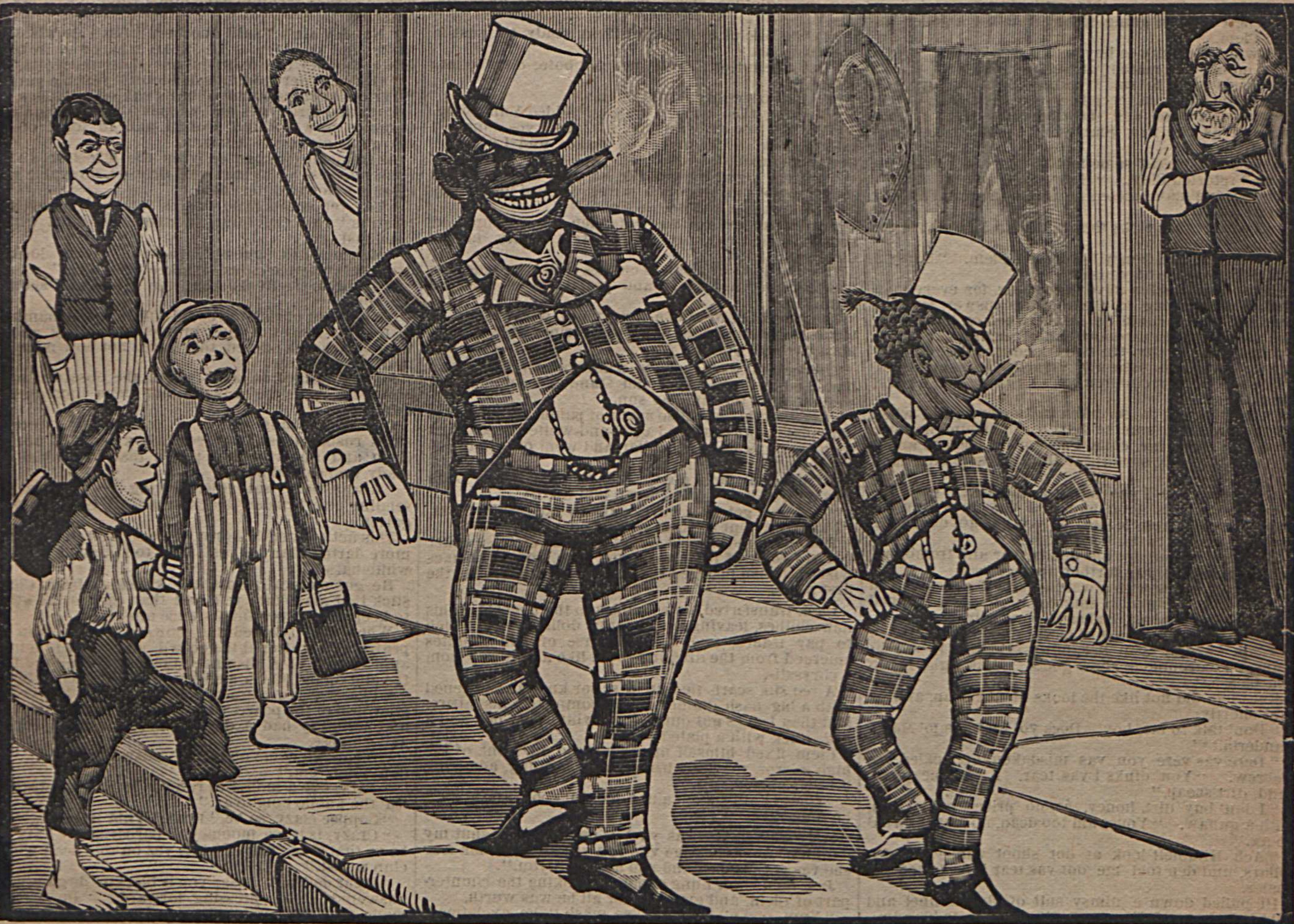
This bit of moral philosophy was too much for the wisdom of Yum Bung to fathom, and Clem would have carried the day and gone to the city on Friday had not Mr. Nettlebone had something to say about it.

He had no earthly objection to the two Dromios going to town, but he did not propose to let them break up two days when one was sufficient.

He therefore put his foot down on Friday and declared that they must go on Saturday, or not at all.

"Don' make no difference to me," remarked Clem. "ef he kin stan' my lookin' like a tramp one day wid dese yer clothes all burnt up wif powdah; but it's bery 'stressin' to me, I tole yo', to go 'roun' dis way. Hurts my feelin's, chile. Guess I got some pride 'bout me, if I is only a coon."

Considering the rig in which Clem had made his first appearance on the place, this pride of his in the



The big, fat danky, with his everlasting grin, and the oily Chinaman, with his almond eyes and child-like smile, were enough to cause attention. Put the two together, and there was no wonder that people looked at them and laughed.

the bottom, sending their fiery contents whizzing through the air, and making the whole scene as light as day.

Cheers went up from the crowd of spectators, and Clem began to sing a camp-meeting hymn.

"Faix, that'll do for yez," said Pat. "Sure, this isn't a funeral."

Poor Yum had had quite enough of fire-balloon ascensions, and he now jumped up and began hopping away on one foot.

"Tinkee debil gettee Yum lat time," he chattered. "Gettee shoe, makee Yum hop likee glasshoppee."

"Gorry, s'pose youse been taken up to de sky? Wha' you do den?" asked Clem.

"Go lup high, allee samee sky-locket."

"H'm!"

"Den Yum be lillee angel, singee song allee samee blovs, blow blumpet likee Gabillel."

"Sho! G'way, chile. Wha' dey want ob a Chinaman in heaben? Dey don' 'low dem dere. Dey habent' taken out dere papers."

"Hi-yai! Clemmy big fool, him plenty heap fat gettee in, so be. Boss man chuckee him lout."

The balloon had by this time discharged all its fiery cargo, and was growing more and more indistinct as it sailed up into the distant heavens.

"That's all," said Jimmy. "Let's go home."

"H'm!" muttered Clem, as he started off, "it mighty lucky de Fo'f ob July day don' come ev'y day. Ef it did dis chile leab de country."

#### CHAPTER XIV.

WELL, the Fourth of July was over at last, and both Clem and Yum Bung were still alive.

"Gottee lot cashee, sabee up heap, slirty dol', no spendee cent slee mont's."

"G'long wif youse. I make more'n dat Fo'f o' July day. Specs I starbe m'se'f fo' t'ree monfs, when I kin make a pile on de turn ob a kyard? Wha' you know 'bout makin' money? Yo's on'y a chile when yo' comes to look at wha' dis niggah kin do."

"Neber mind. Yum gottee sugar allee same. Go to Yorkee, gettee full likee boys, no foollee Yum."

"Wha' yo' get wif dat money ob youn'?"

"Gettee fixee up, allee same swell, cally club, gettee white dicee, di'mond ling, biggee watch, smokee butt, likee tuffee."

"Come 'long o' me, I fix yo' up. Tol' yo' what, chile, it takes dis niggah to tol' yo' de kin' ob close yo' want. Specs dey don' tink I knows wha' good close is up yer, case I ain't had a chance to show dem. Ef dis coon don' put on de style, den dere ain't no such t'ing nowhar."

"Clemmy look likee molnin' glory, biggee sun-flowee, so be."

"Di'n't I tol' youse I war a daisy? Clem Brown don' hab no flies crawlin' 'bout his wool, honey."

"Askee ole man lettee go Yorkee, go on splee."

"To be course, but dat all right, him let Clem Brown do jus' what him likes. Does yo' tink I wasn't a free niggah? Guess I don' ax leabe to do nuffin'."

"When go? To-morrow Sad'dy, goodee day; no go Fliday, badee luck."

"G'long wif youse, you heathen. Don' tol' me nuffin'. Don' you s'pose one day am good as anoder? Didn' de Lawd make um all? An' yo' don' s'pose de Lawd would slouch him wo'k, does you? Wall, I guess not."

fit and style of his garments was just the least bit absurd.

Early on Saturday morning those two tramps fixed themselves up as becomingly as they could, considering the dilapidated condition of their wardrobe, and with their money in their pockets started for the train.

They were in for a holiday, and all hands wished them good luck as they left the house.

"If somebody don't confiscate yez for scarecrows, it'll be a lucky thing for yez!" laughed Pat.

"Two little dndes on ball!" sang out Timmy.

"Look at the colored masher!" warbled Peggy. "He's pretty enough to frighten rats!"

"Small loss if they lose their way an' niver come back!" added Mrs. Roriarity.

Away they went, however, unmindful of these satirical remarks, and soon after reaching the station, having procured tickets, the train came along.

Clem was for going into the parlor car at once, nothing being too good for him.

The colored porter had something to say to this, however, and he declared with great pomposity:

"Look heah, sah, dis cah isn't fo' niggans!"

"Ain' yo' ridin' on it?" asked Clem. "Yo' is cream-col'd, but yo' is a niggah ali de same. Dey'd bettah put youse out, if dat am de rule."

"I'se de po'tah, sah, an' is pribelized. Yo' cah'n't ride on dis yer cah."

"I'se got a ticket, chile, an' I guess I'se entitled to ride on dis yer train."

"Lemme see yer ticket."

"Is you de conductor? Guess I know de rules well as any stuck up white niggah!"



"Don't you be sassy," cried the porter, waxing indignant. "I'll put yo' off fo' two cents."

Clem let off a laugh that put the locomotive whistle to shame.

"Like ter see you do it, honey," he remarked. "I'se putty heaby, an' ef I fall on youse once yo'll look flatter den a sheet ob paper."

Just then the conductor came along, hustled Clem and Yum Bung into the smoking car, waved his hand to the engineer and jumped aboard.

Clem would not stand any nonsense from one of his own race, no matter how light his complexion might be, but when a bona fide man started to boss him it was a different matter.

He found a seat, and made lots of fun for all hands during the run to New York by his comical looks and by his queer speeches.

He and the Chinaman made a dandy team, and the men in the smoker knew that they had struck a picnic as soon as they saw this comical pair.

"Where are you going, Ebony?" asked a joker behind Clem.

"Gwine to de city to buy suffin'."

"A monkey to match yourself, I suppose?"

"Yas, is youse fo' sale?" asked Clem quickly, thus getting the laugh on the joker, who subsided.

"Why don't you and the Chinaman start a dime museum as the new Siamese Twins?" asked another.

"We'se lookin' fo' some fool to put his money up on us," retorted Clem. "Hab yo' got any?"

The second man quieted down at once, and a third remarked:

"The feller that picks that moke up for a flat is going to get left."

"Right you are, honey," laughed Clem. "Sorry I can't say de same ob youse."

Then there was fun alive in that car, for every man that said anything to Clem got his answer, for that laughing moke could be bright when on his mettle, though he was stupid enough at other times.

Arrived in the city, the two friends made their way across town, and presently struck Chatham street, where the Hebrew children were on the watch for just such customers.

Clem was not to be taken in, however, and when one half-washed Israelite tried to collar him, he said: "G'way f'om me, chile, I'se got de cholera and I gibs him to youse, shuah! It alus takes de dirty men fust."

"So hellup me, I vas made a misdake," cried the Jew, elevating his shoulders. "I vas dook you for anoder mans. Ach, Moses! off you vas got de golera, vy don'd you go to der horsepittle?"

Then he retired to his den in fear and trembling, and Clem led the way further up the street.

Presently a Jew with a watch-chain like a cable and a nose like a gigantic interrogation point tapped Clem on the shoulder, and said, persuasively:

"Did you want a shoot of clothes, mein friendt? I vas firs anyding von der lifing skeleton to der fat mans. No drouble to show goots. Valk righd in, off you blease."

But Clem did not like the looks of the shop, and he said shortly:

"Don't talk to me, boy. Does yo' took me fo' Marse Vanderbilt?"

"Dere vas vere you vas misdaken," chuckled the Hebrew. "You dinks I vas tear. I vas sheap, my shild, dirt sheap."

"I don't buy dirt, honey, at no price," said Clem, with a guffaw. "Youse am too deah, no mattah wha' yo ax."

"Ach Himmel! look at dot shoot vunce for sefen tollars, und den told me dot vas tear," protested the dealer.

He pulled down a flimsy suit of blue flannel and held it in front of Clem, expecting to excite his admiration.

"Yust look at dot!" he cried. "Off you vas Wanderbilt himselluf, you couldn't look neater vunce in dot shoot."

"Took um away," said Clem; "you can saw de moths in dat coat."

"Mot's!" cried the Jew. "Dere vas mot's in him? Vell, vat you expect for sefen tollars? Does you want canary beirds?"

Then he pranced back into his shop, while Clem and Yum went on their way, Clem airing that big grin of his and Yum wearing a smile of the utmost placidity.

Presently they came in front of a store larger and neater than any they had seen, the proprietor of which did not stand outside waiting, like a shark, to pounce on any luckless countryman that might come along.

Instead of that, he had his daughter, a comely Jewess, in the doorway, and it was her smile that did the business.

"Belly nice gal, dat," said Yum, with his cast iron grin.

"Dat's a yaller gal, sho's yo' bo'n," ejaculated Clem. "Don't yo' see her smilin' at dis coon? Gorry! she get on to dis niggah's shape right away. Tol' yo' what is is, honey, it takes Clem Brown f'om Ca'lina to pal'lyze de gals."

"Gal winkee at Yum," said that conceited Chinaman. "Allee bloke up on shapee."

"Les' go in heah, dis am de boss place fo' de business," said Clem.

So in they went, the proprietor coming forward all smiles and gestures.

"Mein gootness, poys, vas dot you?" he exclaimed.

"So hellup me, I vas giat to see you. I don'd vas set eyes on you for more as fife year. Dake a seat. Vat could I done for you dis beautiful mornin'?"

"Fo' de land sakes, does yo' know Clem Brown? Goodness me, I didn't know I had any 'quaintances in York."

"Does I knowed you, Mr. Prown?" exclaimed the

Jew, catching at the name. "Vy, mein cracious, ve vas poys togeder. Vat you vant? I gifes you eberyting von a bair off socks to a sillik hat."

"Know Yum Bung, too?" asked the Celestial, anxious to make the acquaintance of so pleasant a gentleman.

"Did I know you, Mr. Bung? Did I know my own moder? Vy, you vos vash my shirts for dree year. Could I sell you a suit off clothes vunce?"

"Yeppee, gettee same as Clem, allee same Melican man."

"De Fo'f of July day was too much fo' us, don't yo' see?" exclaimed Clem, "an' dese yer t'ings is done busted."

"Den you vants eberyting?"

"Dat's 'bout de size ob it. Wha' yo' charge to fit we uns out fo', f'om our heads to our foots?"

"Py Shiminy! I vos got two peautiful suits, yust alike, dot you would dink vos made for dwins. I fix you owd, clothes, shoes, hat und all, for dirty tollars."

"Fo' de bofe of us?" asked Clem, ready to push a good bargain.

"Och, mein Gott! Nein, not for bote; dirty tollars abiece."

"I gibs yo' twenty," said Clem.

"Me too, allee same Clemmy," added Yum Bung.

"Vell, off you drow in de oldt t'ings, I vos done it," said the Jew. "My name vos Isaacs, und I vos vite. Dere is my card."

"Dat all right, mistah Ike, so tote de fixins out soon as yo' kin, an' when we'se dressed me an' my frien' is gwine out to see de sights."

"So hellup me, you vas be taken for a gouple off sports righd away, my tears," cried Isaacs, taking Clem's measure.

Then he laid out a suit of clothes which for loudness would silence a cannon, and proceeded to measure Yum.

The garments were of a light plaid, with checks as big as the palm of your hand, and stripes wide enough for a barber's pole.

The colors were yellow, white, brown, black and blue, and the eyes that could stand the combination could look at the mid-day sun.

Clem took his suit, also a pair of patent leather shoes with plaid cloth tops, and a red-and-white striped shirt with big cuffs and high collar, and went off to a dressing-room to array himself.

"Trow owit your goat," said the Jew, when Clem was undressing, "und I wrap him ub."

"Don't yo' get in a hurry, Mistah Ike," said Clem.

"I kin bring out de tings when I comes mysef."

That euchered the Jew out of weeding Clem's pocket book of some of its superfluous cash, and Mr. Isaacs wished he had charged the coon forty dollars in the first place.

Clem transferred his valuables to the pockets of his new clothes, leaving out twenty dollars with which to pay Isaacs, and in the course of five minutes emerged from the dressing-room like a butterfly from a chrysalis.

A red silk scarf, tied in a sailor knot and fastened with a big flash diamond pin, completed his attire, and then Isaacs got out a shiny white silk hat and a little stick with a plated head.

Clem fixed himself up and stood in front of the high mirror, reaching from floor to ceiling, admiring himself hugely.

"Guess I ain't such a bad lookin' coon aftah all," he remarked.

"My friendt, you vas yust a daisy, und I shut my daughter up mit a cage vile you vas aroundt, for fear she vas got mashed und run away mit you."

Just then Yum Bung came out looking the counterpart of Clem, and grinning for all he was worth.

"Yum one o' boys, makee mash," he exclaimed.

"Belly nicey suitee, allee same plince."

"A brince, my friendt!" cried Isaacs, enthusiastically. "Vy, my tear sir, der Kaiser himselluf vas look like a dramp ven you gomes aroundt."

Then Yum coiled his queue about the top of his head, donned a white hat like Clem's, took the natty little stick in his hand, and admired himself in the glass.

"Belly fine. Allee gal want kissee," he remarked, complacently.

"I dinks you vas righd," responded Isaacs. "You vas two dudes von Dudeville. Off my Rebecca sawn you vunce I hafe to shain her up."

Clem then paid Isaacs the twenty dollars agreed upon, Yum following suit, and then the Jew, seeing that Clem had plenty of money, said suddenly:

"Oh, I vas forgod somedings. You vas vant a gold vatch und shain. I sell you vun for a pargain—only tane tollars."

"Wha' fo' I want a watch?" asked Clem. "I kean't tell de time ob day, an' dey allus calls me to dinnah."

"Den you could veer a shain alone. Dot looks nice mit dot shoot. Here vas vun I sold you for, fife tollars. So hellup me, I paid six for it in Ikey Goldstein's hockshop, und he vas gife sefen on it, but der man's lose der ticket und nefer come after it vunce."

"Gib yo' two dollah an' a half fo' it," said Clem.

"Dake it, my friendt. I wasn't stand on drifes ven you vas such a goot customer," said Isaacs, willingly enough, for even then he made two dollars on the chain.

He fastened it on Clem's waist-coat, so that the coon appeared to have a watch, and then Yum took one like it at the same price.

"Gome again, der next tme you vas in der city, und I treat you feirst-class," said Isaacs, opening the door and bowing them out.

"Dat wha' I call a gen'man," remarked Clem, as the two dazzling swells passed up the street.

It was not long before the street boys caught on to

the pair, and it would have been strange if they had not attracted attention even in the crowded streets of a big city like New York.

Their startling suits, white hats, red ties, tooth shoes, and slender sticks would have been enough for the first place to make a blind man look around without mentioning anything else.

The big, fat ducky, with his everlasting grin, and the oily Chinaman, with his almond eyes and chil-like smile, were also enough to cause attention.

Put the two together, however, and there was a wonder that people looked at them and laughed.

"Get on to der walkin' sign-boards!" cried a newsboy. "What are dey for, anyway?"

"Some kinder soap, I reckon," replied a bootblack, who did not seem to have made the acquaintance of any kind for many days.

"Dey're de two end-men of a minstrel show," suggested an urchin whose familiarity with the top gallery of variety theaters gave him a right to express an opinion.

"No, dey ain't," said another; "dat's de whistlin' moke, and de oder is de bloke what was froze to death, and dey're advertisin' one of der theaters."

"Get on to der mout' on der coon," yelled a gamin. "Yer could cut a pound o' beefsteak off'n his lips."

Boys and girls, men and women, dogs and cats now began to crowd behind, around, and in front of our two gayly-attired pedestrians.

As they sailed majestically up the street, in all the consciousness of being well dressed, a regular procession followed after them.

"Tol' yer what, chile, we is 'tractin' consid'able 'tention," chuckled Clem, swinging his stick with a dandified air.

"Makee mash, guess," muttered Yum, looking around. "Gettee clowd, thinkee belly nice."

"Get on to the freaks from the museum!" shouted the boys.

No amount of ridicule could affect the equanimity of the two heroes, as they promenaded along, and, as no violence was offered, they cared not how many remarks were made.

So they walked on, arm-in-arm, the observed of all observers, while the crowd behind them increased in numbers.

One rash young fellow of boot-blackening propensities rushed ahead, planted his box down in front of Clem, and undertook to polish that individual's already well shined boots.

"G'way dar," said Clem, lifting his big foot and sending box, brushes, blacking and all flying into the gutter.

This act created a storm at once, and one gamin, more daring than the rest, tried to knock the coon's white hat off.

He got a crack across the knuckles from Clem's stick that made him yell, and that caused the others to keep at a respectful distance after that.

When they reached the Bowery a policeman appeared and scattered the crowd, who hooted their disapprobation at a distance sufficiently removed from the end of the officer's club to warrant such action.

"Phat are yez attractin' a crowd fur?" asked the guardian of the peace, who was of Milesian extraction and naturally had a decided aversion to all negroes and Chinese.

"De crowd come ob itsef," answered Clem. "We don't fotch 'em."

"Faix, I've a moind to run yez both in fur obstruc-tin' the public hoighway."

"Coppee clazy, so be," mused Yum Bung.

"Crazy, is it, ye moon-eyed barbarian? Faix, be ye that'll be crazy if I hits yez on the head wid club wanst."

"Clear de track, boss; you is blockin' de gangw," answered Clem, pressing forward. "De stree made fo' 'Merican citizens, an' you'm nuffin but a impo'ted Irisher."

"What's the matter, Murphy?" said a voice, and the officer beheld a police sergeant before him.

"Nuthin', sor. I wur only protecthing these gin-tlemin from insult at the hands av the populace."

"Very well; but there's no use in taking all day about it. They look big enough to take care of themselves."

"An' good-lookin' enuff, too, boss," added Clem, grinning so expansively that the corners of his big mouth disappeared behind his huge collar.

The officer went one way, the sergeant another, while Clem and Yum proceeded up the Bowery, attracting as much note as a circus procession or a German band.

Having gone some distance and being rather fatigued with the walk, for the day was a sweltering hot one, Clem suddenly observed the tempting display in the windows of a big restaurant, and said:

"Dis am de spot fo' us. Le's hab suffin' to eat an' den we kin look out fo' de train."

"Clemmy know way to flain?" asked the Chinaman. "Yum gettee lost, no sabe stleet."

"Don't yo' worry 'bout dat," sniffed Clem. "Dis niggah fetch up all right. Jes' yo' trus' to Clem Brown an' yo' 'il neber git lef'."

Then he walked into the restaurant and paralyzed the head clerk by asking:

"Say, boss, how much yo' ax to feed us two gem-men by contrac'? You'm got a big job on han', an' we don't wan' you to lose nuffin'."

The man looked at Clem for a moment, and then bursting into a laugh, said loudly:

"Charlie, order up a tubful of hash, we've got an army to feed!"



## CHAPTER XV.

and when the chief clerk in the feeding establishment the extraordinary order for a tubful of hash he attracted the general attention of every one in the place.

Clem and Yum Bung instantly became the center of attraction, and a grand laugh arose at once.

"Guess yo' am mistookin in de pahities, boss," spoke up Clem, loftily. "We is gemmen, we is, an' we don' eat hash like common folks."

"Take a seat, sah—this way, sah," said the head waiter, rushing up, the prospect of a big tip making him particularly officious.

"Thank yo', sah; you is a gemmen, if you is cream-cold," said Clem. "I'se got a lilly business dis man fus, den I tend to youse."

"What can we do for you, gentlemen?" now asked the proprietor, coming up, while the clerk vanished.

"Wha' yo' gib us two 'stinguished gemmen a fus-class dinnah fo'—dat wha' I want to know, sah."

"Dollar a head; regular charge, sir," returned the boss of the shop promptly.

"Yo' don' make no extra cha'ge fo' big feeders?"

"No, sir, just the same for all."

"Wall, now, dat's kin' o' wha' I call gem'my, bress my heart ef it isn't. Guess we'll stop to dinnah wif youse, boss."

"Theodore, show the gentlemen to their seats."

Clem was in the highest kind of feather at being waited on by a dinky, bowed to by a white man, and being paid as much attention as though he had been the president himself.

He and Yum handed their hats and sticks to a waiter, took seats at a table all to themselves, and were then asked what they would have.

Clem had his bill of fare upside down, and Yum Bung looked at the back of his, but Clem settled things by remarking:

"Jes' yo' bring us de bes' yo' got, an' neber min' troublin' me wif foolish questions. Long as I gets de bes' dere is, I ain't particular."

The waiter vanished and presently served up a regular course of dinner in its proper order, and with suitable intervals between the courses, Clem sweeping all before him.

Soup, fish, roast, entree, vegetables, bread, boiled, sweets, dessert, fruits, coffee and ice cream all disappeared down his capacious mouth till the waiter began to wonder whether he had an all day job before him.

"Hab I got to de end ob de lis'?" asked the laughing moke, when a wine glass filled with toothpicks was placed before him.

"That's all, sir."

"Den jest' go ober de track ag'in, till yo' get to de oder end," returned Clem, calmly. "I'se on'y jes' beginnin' to get ober de emp'y feelin'."

The waiter darted an appealing glance toward the proprietor, but as that gentleman nodded approval, away went the long suffering servitor to repeat the dose.

The restaurant man did not care for Clem, and Yum Bung had attracted an unusual amount of custom to his place, and if they had gone through the bill of three times he would still have made a handsome profit.

"Hang me if it wouldn't pay to hire them to come in here every day and eat," he remarked to the cashier. "Business has been booming since they came in."

Clem had miscalculated his capacity, however, when he started back over the course, and he had not reached more than half way to the soup before he had to cry quits and lay down his knife and fork.

"Dat am de squarest feed I eber had," he declared; "but dere am a limit eben to my appyite. I neber knowed befo' what it wuz to git enuff, but now I hab had dat 'sper'ence."

Yum Bung had been knocked out long since, and had been waiting patiently for Clem, who now arose and took his hat and stick from the waiter.

"Anything for the waiter, sir?" asked the man, who had certainly earned a fee.

"Yo' is a gemman, yo' is, an' I isn't de man to fo' get a kin'ness," said Clem, giving the dinky half a dollar. "Ef yo' don' tink dat am enuff, I'll chuck yo' to see wheadder yo' gits dat or nuffin'."

The waiter concluded not to run his chances, and Clem promenaded to the cashier's desk and paid his bill, Yum doing the same because Clem did, though he was by no means as generous with his money as his dusky companion.

"I allus smokes aftah dinnah," said Clem, with all the airs and importance of a nabob. "Gib us two ob yo' bes' cigars, boss."

"Yum Bung likee pipe," suggested the heathen, much to the coon's disgust.

"You 'stonish me," he muttered. "Wha' de use my tryin' to brung yo' up 'spectable? Ef yo' don' know how to behabe, jes' watch me an' took lessons, an' ef yo' keep yo' mouf shet folks won' know wha' a big fool yo' is."

Having delivered himself of this wise counsel, Clem lighted a big cigar, stuck it in one corner of his mouth, tipped his hat forward, thrust his cane into a side pocket of his coat, and marched out, followed humbly by Yum Bung.

Up the Bowery they went, still attracting all possible attention, and presently Clem was attracted by a big beer garden with Christmas trees standing outside.

"Fo' de land sakes, I mos' fo'got my drink!" he cried. "Foller me, yo' headen, an' I show yo' mo' style dan yo' eber see afo'."

Into the saloon they went, and here, as in the restaurant, they brought any amount of custom to the bloated aristocrat who ran the gilded distillery annex.

"Wha' yo' hab?" asked Clem.

"Lillie gin. Puttee in bittee."

"H'm! gin an' bittahs fo' de Chinaman!" snorted Clem, in disgust. "But gib me rum an' lasses. I'se high-toned, I is. None ob youse gin an' bittahs fo' me!"

"When is the show coming off?" asked the bar-keeper, with a grin.

"Wha' show was dat, boss?"

"Yours. Ain't you minstrels?"

"Wha' am dat?"

"Fellers that sing and dance and play on the banjo and bones."

"Why, bress yo' heart, I kin do dat myse'f, an' I isn't a wha' yo' call 'um."

"Can you sing an' play the banjo?"

"Kin I?" and Clem looked unutterable things.

"Wall, I should just laugh if I couldn't," and Clem thereupon proceeded to let off a laugh that filled the room and overflowed at the door and windows.

"Give us a tune, then, on this," and the dispenser of drinks went to a closet and brought out a banjo, which he handed to Clem.

That laughing moke took the instrument, sat down on a table and began to thrum away for dear life, singing with all the lung power of which he was capable.

The music started Yum Bung to going, and he presently began to dance a series of most remarkable steps, the like of which had never been seen.

"Kin I dance!" cried Clem presently, breaking off his song in short order. "Well, I guess so," and he hopped out upon the floor and cut a pigeon wing in true plantation style.

The place soon filled up and trade was lively, Clem coming in for his share of liquid refreshment on account of his musical abilities.

He treated once or twice himself, and the sight of his money, which he displayed recklessly, induced one or two rather shady characters present to try and get the jolly coon intoxicated so as to rob him.

Yum Bung was fast becoming intoxicated, and Clem would have been so at another time, but the big dinner he had eaten saved him from such a fate.

"Ef dat big fool Chinaman stay yer much longer," he muttered, "he be drunk as a pig. 'Pears to me some folks ain' got no sense 'tail. Wha' I do in dis big city ef we get drunk? Gorry, I lose my way fo' sho'."

Putting down the banjo, therefore, and walking up to the bar, Clem asked:

"Won' yo' please tell me de time ob day, boss? I'se a lile hard ob hearin', an' kean't tell 'um myse'f."

"It's two o'clock."

"Fo' de land sakes, an' de train go out at free! Guess I bettah stir dese 'ere pegs, else I miss 'um."

"Oh, what's your hurry?" asked one of the men, who had designs on the coon's money. "Take another drink."

"No mo' fo' dis chile, honey. Come along, yo' headen; yo's got ter stir yo' crooked legs, yo' has."

Then Clem hooked on to Yum Bung's arm and lugged him out in short order.

"Clemmy big fool no stay. Hab heap fun. Whoop!"

"Stop yo' noise, chile, and come along o' Clem. Don' youse know nuffin? Spects yo' don't."

Clem steered down the Bowery, and although both the sight-seers staggered a good deal, they managed to get ahead, Clem knowing when he was to turn so as to go to the boat.

The remarkable appearance of these two dandies caused as much commotion as in the morning, but Clem rather liked that than otherwise, and as for Yum Bung, he was tickled to death by the notoriety he had suddenly acquired.

"Hi-ya, think Yum one o' boys," he muttered, thickly. "Callee Yum belly nice, great fellah, heap big man, whoop!"

"Hol' yo' jaw," interposed Clem. "Does yo' wanter be taken up to de stadium house? Dat wha' dey do wif yous if yo' don' stop o' dat hollerin'."

After this Yum kept a little more quiet, and when they had reached the ferry the walk and the profuse perspiration he had been in sobered him up considerably.

The ride across the river fixed him up all right, and when he and Clem took their seats in the train he was as quiet as he usually was, although his comical rig made him the object for the laughter of all.

"Guess dem folks on de plantation open deir eyes when dey see us come back," remarked Clem, as the train left the city. "Won' dey stare at us?"

The intense heat of the day had called up a thunderstorm of no mean magnitude, and the train had proceeded but a few miles when it broke in all its force.

The rain fell so heavily that it became impossible to see the country through which they passed, while the thunder and lightning were almost incessant.

"Too muchee noise," muttered Yum Bung, looking decidedly uneasy as a louder clap than usual sounded. "No likee thundee, no likee lain."

"Dat nuffin' but a shower," remarked Clem. "Mustn' min' dat. It'll be ober fo' long."

But it was not over before long, for the further they went the worse it seemed to get, the rain coming down in torrents and the thunder shaking things up generally.

As station after station was stopped at the passengers got out until, at last, Clem and Yum Bung were the only occupants of their car, and then, having nothing else to think of, Clem began to watch the rain and wonder if it ever would let up.

"Spec' I spoil dat new hat of mine," he ejaculated, mentally. "Dat too bad, too, 'cause I wanter mash dat yaller gal up to de house."

When they reached their station, Clem and Yum got out, the rain having stopped as it seemed.

"Ain't nobody done send a car'age fo' us?" asked the coon of the man at the station.

"Didn't see none."

"Why, dat am strange. Guess dey mus' hab fort we was comin' by de nex' train."

"Guess they did," answered the man, laughing at the idea of Mr. Nettlebone sending his carriage for two of his help.

"Dey ain't no vehicle ob no kin' dat we kin hab, is dey?"

"No, the hacks don't come down to this train."

"An' dey ain't huffin'?"

"Well, yes, there's a wheelbarrow out under the shed there. You can get in and let the Chinaman roll you up to the house."

"Does yo' took me fo' a bar'l ob po'k, to be toted in a wheelbarrow? G'way, chile, guess yo' don' know who I is."

"Well, there ain't nothing else. Ain't you able to walk?"

"Guess I hab to, an' it's free miles, ebery bit, an' mebbly fo'. Come 'long, Yum, you an' me ain't rich nuff to hab a car'age, ef we is good looking."

So those two objects started off for the Nettlebone place, Clem being rather dubious as to the result, and Yum leaving everything to Clem.

It was all right for the first half mile, but then, when there was no shelter to get under, the rain got tired of its vacation and began to fall again.

And fall it did, in right good earnest and as if striving to make up for lost time.

"Dere am no help fo' it, ez I kin see," muttered Clem, "an' I guess we mought ez well keep on ez ter go back now."

So they kept on, and so did the rain keep on also, coming down in wholesale lots, probably so as to flood the market.

It was not long before both Clem and Yum Bung were wet to the skin, but as the rain was of the warm variety there was no serious result to be apprehended from that.

Clem did not mind the wetting so much as he did the thoughts of being unable to cut a good appearance when he reached the house.

That high barber-pole collar of his wilted and hung about his neck like a rag, while his white silk hat looked as if it had been drowned, and began to show signs of rapid dissolution.

His clothes were saturated, and somehow or another began to feel too tight for him, though just then he had no time to stop and investigate matters.

On he plodded through the mud, the rain giving him the entire benefit of its reviving powers, while the luckless Chinaman followed on behind, saying nothing, but doing a heap of thinking.

If anybody ever caught him going to New York again on a racket they would know it.

Once was quite sufficient to last him a life-time, and a good long centenarian life-time at that.

The rain never once let up till they reached the house, nor even then, for it seemed to have come to stay.

The broad piazza was well sheltered from the rain, however, and here were gathered Mr. Nettlebone and the quiet twins, Mrs. Rorarity, and others of the household, enjoying the sight of the rain, while they kept as dry as chips.

Suddenly the two wayfarers appeared before the party on the piazza, and everybody set up a shout.

The sight would have raised a smile on the face of a graven image.

Those nobby suits, not being all wool by any means, had shrunk until they were only half their original size.

There stood Clem and Yum Bung, wearing trousers that only reached a few inches below the knees, coats which had climbed half way up their backs, and the sleeves of which extended but to the elbows, while the waistcoats were not much bigger than liver pads.

The white hats were ready to fall apart, the crowns out of shape, and the brims hanging down all around, while the natty shoes were in a sad state of disruption, the soles being about to part company with the uppers, and the buttons having long since taken wings to themselves and flown away.

No wonder the twins laughed when they saw the comical sight.

Two grown men dressed in garments which would have been small for midgets was enough to make any one laugh.

If that honest Jew Mr. Isaacs could have been present he would have laughed himself sick over his clever bargain.

"Where did you pick up the children's clothes?" asked Timmy.

"Fit you like the paper on the wall—eh, Clem?" chimed in Jimmy.

"Luk at the two orphans!" cried Mrs. Rorarity. "Faix, it's a wondher yez weren't kidnapped, ye're such beauties."

Then Clem looked at Yum, and Yum looked at Clem, and both took a tumble.

If one looked like that, the other must, as a natural consequence.

"Fo' de land sakes, ef I cotch de Jew what sol' me dese close I butt him all 'roun' New York," declared the coon, indignantly.

"Sheeny man biggee lascal; punchee him head, so be," muttered Yum Bung.

"Go put on your old clothes," said old Peter, with a laugh.

"Don' got 'em, sah. De man he took 'em fo' to pay fo' dese."

"Then go to bed," laughed Jimmy.

The two originals vanished from the scene to escape the laugh that this remark aroused, and Mr. Nettlebone said:

"That nigger has as much sense as that dog of his. The idea of his buying clothes. I'll get some sacking and have a suit made for him. That's all that's fit for such a donkey."



The tony plaid suits were thrown away, for, as they had to be cut to pieces in order to get them off, they were of no further use to anybody.

Fortunately, however, Yum Bung had other clothes, and Clem was fitted out, so that neither were obliged to go naked, but that settled the question as to who was to buy their clothes after that.

The boys had something to laugh at for some time after that, for the ridiculous appearance of those two dudes, standing there in the rain, was something that one could not soon forget.

Two or three days after that the twins put up another job on Clem, whom they could not seem to let alone, he was so easily fooled.

It was evening, and Peggy was standing out at the front gate waiting for her sweetheart, a young fellow with a tea rose complexion.

Clem was on the lawn cleaning up, and the boys coming up, said pleasantly:

"Good-evening, Clem, how goes it?"

"Putty fine, chillen. I feel jes' like a young sheep."

"Then why don't you brace up to Peggy?" asked Timmy.

"She's waiting out there at the gate for you," added Jimmy.

"Go right out and give her a hug!"

"She'll be tickled to death!"

"She expects you to do it!"

"She won't like it if you don't!"

"Fo' de land's sake, does yo' mean dat, chillen?"

"To be sure. You've got a dead certain thing there, and you want to follow it up."

"Now's your time, and if you miss it you're no good."

"Is yo' shuah she lubs me?" asked Clem, somewhat doubtfully.

"As sure as we are that we will have breakfast tomorrow."

"An' she am waitin' out dere fo' me?"

"Of course."

"An' you'd 'vise me to go up an' hug her?"

"Certainly."

"An' gib her a smack?"

"I'd give her two if I were in your place."

"Tink she'd like it?"

"You couldn't please her better."

"Den I'll do it, ef de sky falls."

"That's right. Go in and win."

It was now quite dark, and Clem advanced boldly to carry out his little scheme of love-making.

The boys crept along noiselessly until they within a few feet of the yellow girl and then waited to see the fun.

Along came Clem on the outside of the fence, and when he reached the gate Peggy stepped forward to meet him.

He threw his fat arms around her and kissed her, while she, much to his surprise, did not seem to mind it a bit.

That would have been all right if he had kept his mouth shut and enjoyed his feast in silence.

"Lubly yaller gal, I lubs youse like honey," he ejaculated.

At once Peggy knew that she had been made the victim of misplaced confidence.

She broke away from the big moke in a second, all on fire with indignation.

"How dare you!" she cried, fetching Clem a whack across the nose.

"Take that, you sassy niggah," she added, giving him another on the mouth.

Clem was very much astonished, but before he could get away Peggy had given him a third crack, and not a gentle one by any means.

And at that moment up came Peggy's spoon, and inquired what was the meaning of the fracas.

"He kissed me!" cried the indignant girl, "and if you're a man you won't stand that."

The dusky lover proved his manliness without delay.

He kicked Clem away from that gate and down the road in less than a second.

Not till he had landed the big moke in the ditch did he let up on him and return to his lady-love.

Clem picked himself up sadly and walked back to the house by a roundabout way, muttering to himself:

"I didn't know such a small man could kick so hard. Ef he hadn' been so little I'd 've smashed him jaw. Dat's de las' time I hab anyting to do wif dat gal, or take de 'vice ob dem twins. Dey is de wuss boys in de hull yarth."

## CHAPTER XVI.

As the summer wore on those quiet twins became fatter, healthier, jollier than ever and greater favorites with all on the farm.

They did not cease their pranks, however, and Clem Brown and Yum Bung often came in for their share of some racket which the boys played on them.

"Wha' dem boys 'specs I is?" Clem would remark; "jes' a target fo' dem to shoot of deir jokes at? Tol' yer what, chille, I don' stan' it no mo'."

"Yum gettee lacket allee same Clemmy," the Chinaman would respond. "Some day bloy catchee blazie froom Yum."

"Den youse catch de bounce f'om de ol' man, I tol' yo'. He t'inks de worl' ob dem twins, an' I 'specs ef dey die he die too."

"So be," muttered Yum, and then the conversation would drop, for Yum knew he would be out of a job if old Peter chanced to shuffle off, and that was something he did not care to think about.

One pleasant day in the middle of July, the farmers having gotten well along with their hay-making, the children of the church where the boys attended announced a picnic in a grove a mile or so from the village.

The affair was not confined to the young people, however, the older ones expecting to join in later on after the young folks had started the ball to rolling.

Of course, the twins were going to be there, and as a good time was expected, and everybody had to do his share toward amusing the crowd, the boys took Clem and Yum along to add to the fun.

"You can play the banjo and sing, can't you?" asked Timmy of Clem.

That laughing moke drew himself up several inches, swelled out his chest, and answered with all the importance of a drum major:

"Wall, chille, I jes' reckon I kin discount any col'd gemman in de bizness, an' as fo' dem white fellahs what puts co'k on deir faces, why, dey ain' novheres whin I comes aroun'."

"And you can dance?" added the other twin to the Chinaman.

Clem's look of importance was put entirely in the shade by Yum's suave self-assurance as he replied:

"Yeppe, Yum dance, gettee plize evly time, takee lag off bushee."

"Then that settles it. We'll build a platform and you two jokers can amuse the crowd."

"Gleat spolt, so be, gettee five dollie piecee," observed Yum, who was on the make.

All hands went to the picnic and enjoyed themselves in first-class fashion, particularly Clem and the Chinaman.

In the afternoon the twins, with the assistance of Pat and some of the men from the place, erected a small platform, upon which the two minstrels were to give their exhibition.

It was about six feet square, and was placed on four stout uprights some four or five feet high, the under part being concealed by a curtain of colored muslin.

Quite a crowd collected around the stand when the concert was announced, and the two performers were assisted upon the platform by numerous officious friends.

Clem had a chair provided for him, as he would do most of the playing, and no one ever heard of a banjoist standing up to play.

That big moke was attired in most gorgeous style, with a scarlet coat trimmed with gold lace, white trousers and waistcoat, a blue and white striped shirt with a stand-up collar that reached above his ears, and a high white hat.

His ebony countenance shone as if it had been polished, and his big mouth seemed bigger than ever.

Yum was gotten up in regular Chinese full-dress, with white breeches, a flowered silk blouse with flowing sleeves, and a hat which looked like an inverted wash-basin, while his pig tail, well oiled, hung half way to his heels.

"Clem Brown, the South Carolina mocking bird, will now amuse the company," announced Timmy, and thereupon there was a great clapping of hands.

Clem opened his mouth and smiled so expansively that one youngster near the platform yelled and ran away, thinking he was going to fall into a trap.

The coon then twanged away on his banjo for some minutes, and then striking into a jingling accompaniment, began singing some verses taught him by those quiet twins.

"Kin' folks, come listen to dis song,

I'se not a gwine to keep you long.

We'se come heah fo' to please yer.

I'se ol' Clem Brown from Scuf Ca'lina.

An' dat's Yum Bung, all way f'om China,

An' isn't he a teaser?"

There was great applause at this, and Clem, smiling serenely, went on to the second verse.

"De June bug play on a golden fiddle.

De grasshopper he slip down de middle,

And de cricket, he's a hummer;

De hornet wear a yaller jacket,

De skelter make a drefful racket,

But de bull-frog, he's a stunner."

"Give us some more!" yelled the crowd, and Clem sang half a dozen more verses until his throat began to be as dry as a chip.

"The professor will now take a rest," cried Timmy, "and the Chinese jumping-jack will dance."

Yum now stepped forward to the middle of the platform, and when Clem struck into a lively jig, began to dance for all he was worth.

The two performers with their comical get up, Clem's broad grin and Yum's placid smile, set the spectators in a roar.

They applauded vigorously, and the harder Clem played the faster and higher Yum danced.

But the twins had set a neat little trap for those two innocents, and now was the time to spring it.

At one end of the platform was a big hogshead full of iced water, where free drinks had been furnished all day.

Now the two uprights adjoining this receptacle had not been nailed to the platform, but were kept in place by its weight.

The boys had hitched ropes to these sticks, passing them under the platform and on either side of the water-butt.

At a proper moment, having stationed half a dozen men at a convenient point to yank upon each rope, Timmy gave the signal.

Clem was a heavy fellow, to be sure, but his weight was not enough for a dozen stout fellows to overcome.

The twins gave a loud whistle, and the ropes began to tauten and the uprights to give.

Yum was getting in a double shuffle, followed by some high kicking, when one side of the platform suddenly gave way.

He came down on his back and slid with great rapidity right into the butt of cold water.

Clem gave a yell and tried to jump off his chair and save himself by catching the limb of a tree.

It was no use, and he was soused right into the big barrel on top of Yum, who had just got his breath.

Down they both went, Clem sitting on Yum's head, while the water flew out in great jets.

All hands made a break to avoid a wetting, while the men at the ropes hastily concealed them.

Two seconds was enough to fix the platform in apparently as good condition as before, and then some attention was given to the two men in the tub.

Clem came to the top first, looking like a drowned rat and sputtering and shaking like a man with a chill.

"Golly! didn' flnk dat'd go down like dat," he muttered, as he clambered out.

"Yum down, allee same lat, so be," chattered the Chinaman, as he came up. "Makee wettee, allee same wasbee."

When the crowd saw that no one had been hurt they burst into a laugh at the comical appearance of the two victims, and howled themselves hoarse.

"No mo' pickie-nickie fo' Yum," said the Chinaman, shaking himself. "No makee cussee fool fo' countly fellah 'aftee, no likee fallie in watee."

"Guess I hab all de fun I wan', fo' once," added Clem, as he marched off, leaving a dripping trail behind him. "I knowed suffin'd happen. Dey allus does when dem twins is aroun'."

As Clem walked away with the intention of going somewhere to dry himself, he came to a place where some girls and boys were swinging.

There were two swings, and one had just passed by on the up track and Clem started across.

He did not see the second one, however, which had just started to come down, having reached its highest point.

Across he went, therefore, until somebody called out to him to take care.

Instead of running, he stopped still, right in the path of the descending swing and turned half around.

"Wha' dat you say?" he asked, blandly.

Just then something struck him behind and knocked all the conceit out of him in a jiffy.

It was the feet of a boy and girl in the swing, and he was hit squarely, too.

He went flying, big as he was, and fell flat upon the ground.

"Wha' dat!" he grunted, when he caught his breath, and just then the swing passed over him and then some one stopped it.

Picking himself up, that much abused coon limped away, muttering to himself:

"Neber did hab sech luck at a cam'-meetin' in all my bo'n days. 'Pears to me white folks don' do dese t'ings 's well as de col'd bred'ren."

Just then he met Mr. Joy, who asked him, with a grin:

"What's the matter, Clem? Been having a mud bath?"

"No, sir, I habn't, but I guess a muel kick me in de r'ar an' rrow me in de dus', an' 's I war all wet, de two don' go togeder bery well. Dis ain' one ob my lucky days."

The man laughed, and Clem went off to a neighboring farm-house to dry himself out.

Meantime, Yum Bung had been having lots of fun, as well as his partner Clem.

Leaving the vicinity of the platform, dimly conscious that some sort of joke had been played on him, he presently came to where a party of girls and boys were having a fine time on a see-saw.

One end was heavier than the other, and the man in the middle had a good deal to do in keeping the balance.

"Hallo, Yum," shouted one of the twins. "Get on and take a ride."

"How be? Whatee kind lide? No see um hoss."

"No, no, take a ride on the plank."

"So be plankee fall down, dlop Yum in watee?"

"No, no, there's no water here—jump on."

"All lile," and Yum sat on one end of the plank.

This made the thing balance better, and for a time they went up and down in fine style.

"Hi, ya, dis tuss-late," chirped the heathen.

Presently, however, when his end was on the ground, Timmy gave the boys a wink, and they all rolled off, leaving Yum alone.

The result was that the other end, being decidedly the heaviest, came down with a thump, and up went Yum like a man tossed in a blanket.

He went up all a flying, with arms and legs extended, and his queue trailing out like the tail of a comet.

"Look at the new kind o. flying squirrel," laughed Timmy. "See how his tail sticks out."

Yum came down in a sitting position right in the middle of a sand heap, and was pretty well shaken up, but in nowise hurt.

"Thinkee go off likee clackee," he muttered, when he found chance to speak. "Lillie bloy makee plenty heap fun wif Yum. Too muchee flesh."

With this sage remark the Celestial got up and toddled off to find Clem, resolving not to tempt fate again by indulging in any fun with the boys.

Espying a farm-house not far away, he made his way thither, and upon entering the back door found Clem sitting by the fire warming himself and at the same time getting away with a big bowl of bread and milk.

"Clemmy gettee dlink?" he asked. "Yum likee dlink, too, so be."

The farmer's wife supplied his wants, and hanging his wet blouse before the fire, where Clem had already placed his coat and vest, he attacked his lunch with relish.

"Don' yo' hab nuffin mo' to do wif dem boys, my frien'," advised Clem. "Dey make yo' all kin' ob trouble."



"So be, bloy Hillie lascal, punchee head me catchee."

The two curiosities sat on either side of the kitchen stove in big, wide-seated arm-chairs, and, after finishing their bread and milk, put the bowls on the table and exercised all their energies toward getting dry.

The heat and the lunch combined made them sleepy, and before long they leaned back, stretched out their legs and went off into a heavy doze.

While they were in that position in came our two boys, looking for something to eat, and at once discovered the sleepers.

"Let's have some fun with them," whispered Timmy.

"That's the talk, but how?"

"Change their clothes."

"Bother! Clem couldn't get on that Chinaman's blouse, big as it is."

Presently he caught sight of the two brass buttons on the tail of his coat, and said:

"Sakes alibe, wha' dem buttons doin' dere, way roun' in front?"

He took another look at them to satisfy himself he wasn't dreaming, and then looked over each shoulder in succession.

"Golly, dat am strange. How come dat coat to get dis a way? Kin a fellah git drunk on bread and milk?"

Then he put his hands behind him, felt the buttons, looked around again and followed up with one hand from his waist to his neck, finding his vest turned also.

"De sakes alibe!" he gasped, "dis col'd man's head am turned clean roun'. Didn' fink milk'd do dar, 'deed I didn'."

He was greatly distressed at that, and was too muddled to think of his feet, but walked right on.

"You'll have to have your head cut off and put on straight."

"Or else turn your feet the other way."

"Golly, dis am a dreiful state ob tings," cried Clem, sweating like an ox. "Does yo' fink it las' long?"

"Sure pop."

"No help for it now, Clem."

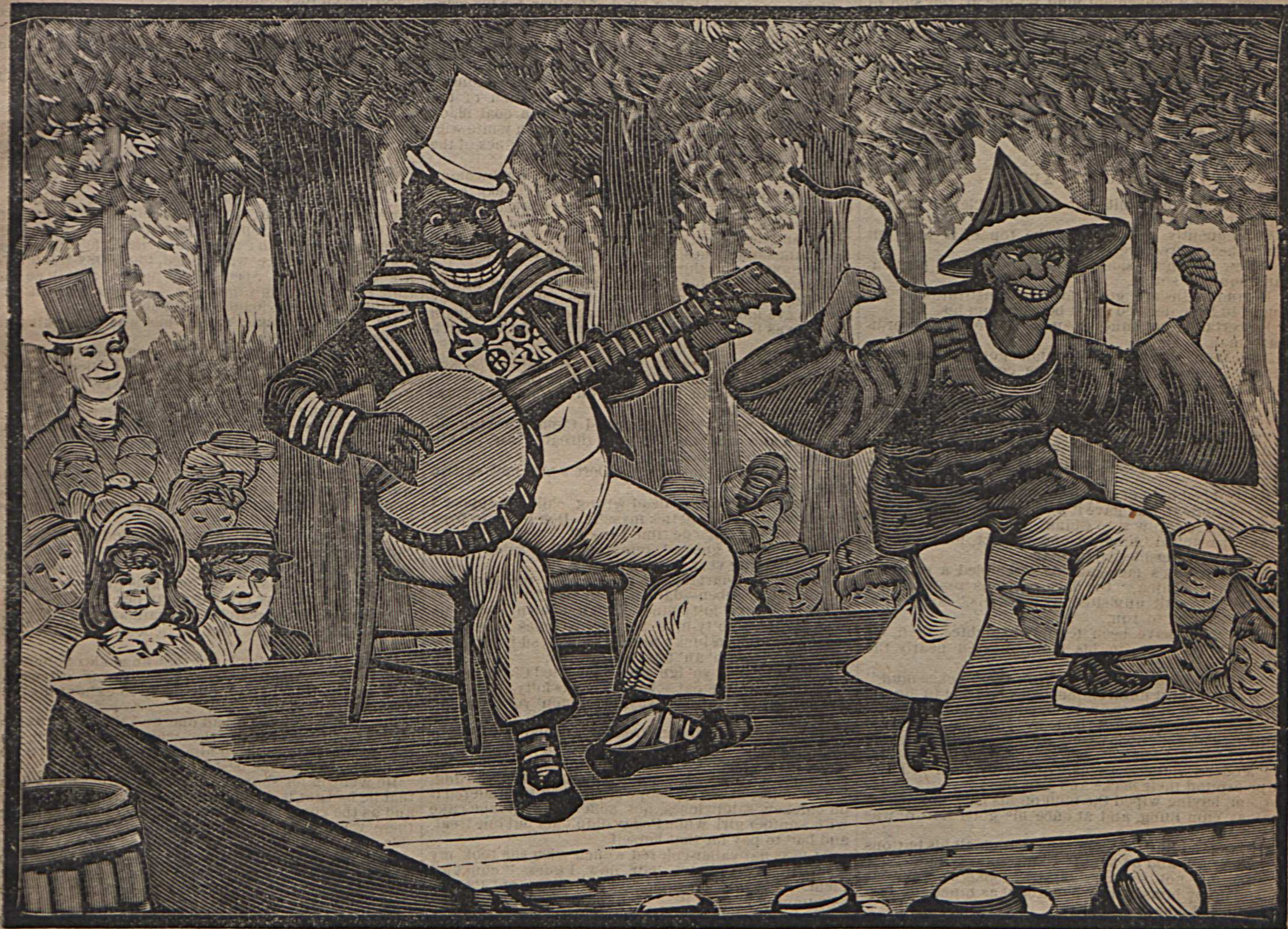
It was too comical to see the look of terror on that poor moke's face as he heard this decision.

The sweat poured off his face, and he put up his coat sleeve to swab it off.

As he did so he stubbed his toe against a big stone and came to a full stop.

Then he looked down at his feet, and saw that they pointed the same way as his nose.

After this he lifted up his coat-tails and saw that his trousers were on all right, at all events.



The two performers with their comical get up, Clem's broad grin and Yum's placid smile, set the spectators in a roar. They applauded vigorously, and the harder Clem played the faster and higher Yum danced.

"Oh, I'll tell you what!"

"Well, out with it."

"Put Clem's coat and vest on hind side before."

"Then he'll have to walk backwards to get home."

"That's the dodge."

The big ducky's clothes were now dry, and taking the vest from the hook, the boys slipped Clem's arms through the holes, and, hauling it up, managed to fasten one button at the top.

"How'll you manage the coat? We can't lift him."

However, Timmy thought of a way, and he tickled Clem's ear with a straw till he jumped and sat up straight.

He was still half asleep, and hardly knew what was going on.

"Put on your coat and come home," said Jimmy, holding up the garment.

Then, with his brother's assistance and a great deal of passive obedience on Clem's part, he got the coat on, fastened the vest and one button of the coat and then skipped out.

Clem fell back in his chair again and went to asleep, in which state the boys left him.

An hour later a trumpet sounded as the signal for breaking up, and the farmer's wife, returning, gave her two lodgers a shaking, and said:

"Come, come, the folks is goin' hum. You've had sleep enough, so git up."

Yum got up, put on his blouse, looked at Clem, laughed and went out.

"Wha' dat Chinaman laugh at, I'd like to know?" muttered Clem, sauntering outside. "Some folks dey laugh at a shadder."

"How I look wif my head on de wrong way. Golly, dat mighty inconvenient same time. Guess I hab to walk back'ards."

Just then he caught up to Yum Bung, who grinned, pointed his long fingers and said:

"Hi, ya! Clemmy dlunk, walkee backlads."

"G'way wif youse, you'se nuffin' but a headen, yo' is. Dis am de style now'days, yo' ign'ant fellah."

Then that laughing moke walked on with all the pride of a turkey gobbler while Yum grinned from ear to ear.

"Gettie on Clemmy, gottee snakes," he chuckled, as some of the picnickers came up.

"Hollo, Clem. What ails you?" asked Mr. Joy.

"Nuffin' ail me. I'se all right. G'long 'bout yo' business."

"What do you wear your coat that way for?"

"Dat coat am all right, I tol' yer. Dat am de propah way to wear um; dat am de lates' style."

"Hollo, Clem, going the wrong way, ain't you?" cried Timmy.

"No, I isn't. Gwine de right way. Gwine to de plantation."

"Why, bless my soul, if he ain't walking backwards," cried Jimmy.

"That's so, his toes point behind."

Then Clem was frightened for a fact.

"Am my head turned fo' shuah?" he asked, turning as white as it was possible for such a black fellow to do.

"Yes!" yelled all hands in chorus.

"I declar'!" cried Clem, "I neber drink any mo' milk. Ef I'd stuck to gin, dis t'ing nebah'd a happened."

The whole thing was as plain to him now as a hole in a ladder.

He stopped short, dashed his hat on the ground, tugged away at his coat till he unbuttoned it, threw that off, rolled up his sleeves, and said:

"Yo' all finks yo' am mighty smaht, but I kin lick de fellah wha' played dis yer trick on me in jis' 'bout two secon's."

This made the crowd laugh worse than ever, and Yum said:

"Clemmy dlunk, put on coatee backla'd, no sabs diffience; goodee joke on Clemmy. Me takee gin."

"That'll cost you the drinks for the crowd, Clem," laughed Mr. Joy.

"Faix, it'll cost yez a basket av shampag-ny, that's phat it will," added Pat, who had come with the wagon to take the boys home.

"Cos' me nuffin', I tol' yo'," muttered Clem, sulkily. "Dat am a trick, dat am. S'pose I donno de way to put on a coat? G'way dar!"

"Guess the ice-water went to his head."

"Milk don't agree with coons."

"Got buggee in um, dlunk as goatee," added Yum Bung.

"Fo' Gawge, I b'liebe yo' do dat," cried Clem.

"You in de fahm house wif me, yo' put up job on dis col'd man."

"Takee loath neber did," protested Yum Bung, getting frightened at Clem's hostile attitude.

"Spec's anybody take a Chinaman's wo'd?" laughed Clem. "No, sah! How yo' like dat?"

Then he fetched one of his big hands around like the sail of a wind-mill, and took Yum Bung under the jaw with it.



Then he put his hand on his capacious stomach and gave a grunt of disgust.

Down went Yum like a shot, yelling and howling, while Clem picked up his coat and stood over him, the picture of wrath.

"Is yo' sorry, an' yo' won't nebbber do so no mo'?" he asked.

"Clemmy big fool," chattered Yum.

"Oh, I is, hey? Den how yo' like dem?"

He put his big foot under the prostrate Celestial and lifted him about three feet from the ground.

Yum came down with more force than elegance, and quickly got out of the way of Clem's feet.

"Niggee man got no blains," he sputtered. "Got-tee head like choppee-block."

Clem put on his coat, right side in front this time, and looked around for his hat.

Timmy had avenged the wrongs of the heathen, however, as Clem soon found out.

There was a convenient mud puddle at the side of the road, and that innocent twin had filled that half full of soft mud, covering it over with a piece of paper from his lunch-basket.

Clem saw the hat resting quietly on its crown, and in a twinkling he had grabbed it up and slapped it on his head.

Squash!

"Fo' de land sakes, what am de mattah now?"

## CHAPTER XVII.

WHEN that high white hat went on Clem's head it went on with a will.

Consequently the mud in the top of it was put under heavy pressure at once.

It flew out on all sides in jets, and with a particularly squashy sound.

If mud baths are good for the constitution, Clem ought to have derived great benefit from his.

He certainly got mud enough to drown any ordinary man.

And then, of course, all hands got hilarious and laughed themselves sick over the comical sight that Clem presented.

"Hi, ya, Clemmy lookie like sclare clow," laughed Yum, who now felt himself avenged for the licking Clem had given him.

As for the big moke, he danced around in lively fashion, sputtering and puffing and yelling blue blazes generally.

He grabbed hold of that mud-filled hat as soon as it was convenient, and gave it a toss as though he would have liked to throw it to China.

And it reached China, in one respect, for it caught Yum right alongside the jugular.

That heathen's face quickly resembled a missionary's map of China, "the dark portions representing the districts still unvisited by missions," as the descriptions used to run.

Yum must have been terribly benighted, then, for the dark portions, in his case, covered nearly the whole tract.

"Cussee—blazes—cussee! Yum allee stickee mud," he warbled most unmelodiously, as he tried to dig the virgin soil off of his tea-colored complexion.

"Begorrah, there's a pair av beauties for yez," laughed Pat Malone. "Only fur the clothes it 'ud be hard to tell 'em apart."

"Modern Siamese twins," added Mr. Joy. "Put a rope around their necks and join them."

Clem, having wiped the mud off his face, got a good look at Yum Bung, and at once his good nature was restored.

He laughed until it seemed as though all his buttons would fly off, and he kept it up all the way home.

Yum did not seem to enjoy the joke so well, but sulked off by himself, and had about as much fun as a deaf man at a show.

About this time Clem met with a stroke of luck which quite set him up in his own estimation, and made him feel so proud that the boys thought that pride deserved a fall, and accordingly put up a job on him to lessen his conceit.

It all came about in the following manner:

"Boss, kin I hab a dollah on account?" asked Clem of Mr. Nettlebone, early one pleasant evening in August.

"What do you want it for, Clem?" asked old Peter.

"You don't seem to know how to spend your money."

"Wall, yo' see, boss, de people ob our chu'ch, de African Mefodis, dey hab a fair dis ebenin' fo' to raise fun's, an' I'd like to help 'em 'long a little bit."

"Oh, they want to raise funds for the church and so give a fair, do they?"

"Dat's it, boss, you'se got 'em right."

"Rather a hot night for a colored fair, ain't it?" said Peter, with a sly wink.

But Clem did not seem to catch the point of the remark, and grinned more from force of habit than from any other cause.

"Deed, dey's gwine to hab a lubly time, boss," he cried enthusiastically, "an' de high-toned col'd folks fo' miles an' miles is gwine to be dar."

"Oh, well, I guess you can go," said Mr. Nettlebone, handing out the necessary cash, "only be sure and be home by eleven and don't get drunk."

"Oh, no, boss, dis is stric'ly temp'ance racket. Golly, ef dey let dem dandy coons get to drinkin' once, dey clean out de whole fair."

So Clem dressed himself and went to the fair by himself, Peggy, the yellow girl, having accepted other escort.

"Don't fink much ob dat gal nohow," sniffed Clem, contemptuously, as he saw Peggy coming on behind. "She ain't my style, she isn't, and as fo' dat coon she am got towin' 'long eb her, he is nuffin' but a washed out yaller boy, dat all."

As Clem had anticipated, all the aristocracy of Ethio-

opia was present at the fair, and the little church was crowded to suffocation at half a dollar a head.

The dealers in Jockey Club perfume and oil of bergamot pomade must have exhausted their entire stock by the odor which greeted one's nostrils upon entering, and a dozen rainbows could not have outshone the dazzling beauty of the ladies' toilets on that occasion.

The Johnsons and Jeffersons and Thompsons were there in full force; the hair-dressing, white-washing and confectionary interests were well represented; the variety of shades, from jet black to cream color, was most infinite, and a kaleidoscope would have been knocked silly in trying to imitate or reproduce the same.

Miss Clara Euphemia White hung on the arm of Mr. Moses Elgantine Jackson, while Professor Montague Brown whispered sugared nothings to Miss Phoebe Jane Madison from ole Virginny.

Clem was in the highest kind of feather, for his grinning mug put everybody in the best of spirits, his face shining like an ebony sun.

There were all sorts of devices for enticing away money and adding to the church treasury.

A black and tan Rebecca dipped up circus lemonade from a churn, supposed, by a great stretch of the imagination, to represent a well, while a coal black gypsy queen, in a crazy quilt uniform and a white wig, told fortunes by cards, the planets and the lines of the hands.

Another cream-colored nymph in a washwoman costume sold sunflowers, daisies and hollyhocks to the dandy niggers at a quarter a bunch, while a bevy of girls, with assorted complexions, waited on the lunch tables and dispensed cold tongue, roast chicken, pigs' feet, ham sandwiches, coffee, iced milk and fruit cake to the hungry and thirsty at cut rates.

The ice cream table did a rushing business, and so did the wheel of fortune, but the thing that took Clem's eye most of all was a big gold watch and chain which was to be raffled for at the close of the festivities.

"How much a chance fo' that repeatah?" asked Clem of the dusky individual who kept the books.

"Two bits, Mistah Brown. You am a lucky man. Why don't yo' go in fo' it?"

"Guess I will, honey," laughed Clem, showing all his teeth and half-way down his throat; "an' yo' kin put me down fo' one chance."

"Wry don't yo' take two? Dere's mo' luck in two chances."

"Dere's whar you'se dead wrong, chile. Suppose I takes two chances an' ties myse'f? Den I hab to frow off and mebbey dat's de time I lose."

"Dat's so, I guess," remarked the sable book-keeper, looking very much puzzled.

"Yer's de quartah, an' yo' kin put me down fo' numbah fo'ty-seben—dat's a lucky one."

"Bettah take fo'ty-nine, Mistah Brown, dere's no luck in dat. Fo'ty-nine am seben times seben, an' seben allus was a lucky numbah. Played it in policy free times runnin' an' bus' de shop."

"Don't display yo' ign'ance," retorted Clem, loftily.

"Ev'body knows dat seben sebens is fo'ty-seben, an' dat's why I play um. G'way, chile, don't yo' try to tell dis nigga nuffin'."

Clem took his ticket, treated an ebony Venus to lemonade, threw dice on the wheel of fortune table and won fifty cents, turned this in again at the supper-table with his stove-polish-complexion darling, won a dollar at the envelope game, and squandered it on chicken sandwiches, hot coffee and sponge-cake with another girl, while Peggy didn't get but one treat, and had to pay for that herself.

"Guess dat yaller-colored wench wish she took my company to dis fistic 'fair now, I guess," chuckled Clem. "De tide am high now, brederen, an' I'ze jis' a-swimmin' in on it."

Finally the time came for raffling off that big gold watch and chain, and the interest centered around the table where the contestants risked their quarters on the hazard of a die.

The first throw, if a raffle, was to count, and after all ties had been thrown off, then the highest throw took the watch.

There was great excitement among the colored male population and the rattling of the dice box was incessant.

After all had thrown, it was found that three had tied at eleven, four at fourteen, two at fifteen, and two at sixteen, Clem being among the latter.

Erastus Sibley, a whitewasher, came highest on the elevens, and Scipio Jones, farmer, Peter Bullwagon, barber, Levi Jefferson, hotel porter, and Clem Brown were the winners of their respective contests, and now threw for the last time.

Peter Bullwagon and Clem each threw seventeen, and so there was a tie between them, which must be thrown off.

Clem showed his anxiety by the way he sweated, the top of his head looking like a miniature lake.

Everybody was excited, and Clem stepped outside to get a breath of fresh air.

"Dat nigga git away f'om me if I don't be car'ful," he muttered.

"Whar am dat set ob dice I had f'om Faro Jack, what used ter live in Souf Ca'lina? Oughter hab 'em on my close somewheres."

He felt all through his pockets, and finally fetched up three cubes of bone, which he regarded with an admiration akin to reverence.

"De country am sated," he remarked with a sigh of relief "Bet yo' sweet life dat straw-col'd coon don't git dat tickah 'way f'om me now."

The intermission for refreshments was over, and Mr. Peter Bullwagon took up the dice box with trembling hands.

"Bes' two in free?" he suggested.

"De rule am de firs' raffle, gen's," said the referee.

"I'll chuck yo' to see who frows firs'," said Peter, wishing to prolong the agony.

"I'se got no 'jections to dat," replied Clem, self-complacency sticking out all over his ample mug.

"I'se got dat nigga fo' suah," he thought to himself, "an' it make no difference ef I lose dis, kase I'se boun' to get de oder one."

Mr. Peter Bullwagon threw six and Clem threw seven, so that the laughing moke still had the last throw.

"Dere's no use buckin' agin sech blin' luck as dis yer chile's, Marse Petah," said Clem with a laugh. "an' youse bettah gib up now afo' I knocks yo' clear out ob time."

"Guess I ain't dead yet, Clem," retorted Peter, and he grabbed that box as though it were studded with diamonds.

"Heah's whar I takes de watch," he remarked, and the three cubes rolled out upon the cloth.

Seventeen they counted.

"Dat am a hard figga to beat, chile," remarked the referee.

"So it am," remarked Clem, as he gathered up the dice and seemed to drop them into the box.

They went into his vest pocket, however, while his own loaded dice went into the box.

"An' dis is whar I beat it," he added, as he rolled three sixes out on the table. "Tol' yer I had de bes' kin' ob luck, chile."

"Clem Brown hab won de watch," cried the referee. "Am you satisfied wif de decision, gents?"

"We is," cried a score of voices.

Clem managed to secure his own dice again, and threw the others on the table, remarking to himself:

"When a man am pushed so hard as dat it am agin human natur not to call on de ol' debil fo' a lil' help. Spec's dem las' dice was loaded, too. Dey wasn't de firs' ones we had. Spec's Peter juggled dem in de las' time roun'. De only mistook he make war in not habin' free on 'em loaded 'stead ob two."

Mr. Peter Bullwagon meanwhile was remarking to himself in this wise:

"F I t'ought Clem Brown was gwine to win dat turnip, I'd ha' wo'ked in free loaded dice 'stead ob two. Dat am de fault ob not bein' prepared fo' ev'y-ting."

There wasn't a prouder ducky in all the land than Clem, as he stuck that big gold repeater in his vest pocket, and trailed the heavy cable chain over his fat stomach.

Peggy was sorry she had not gone with him, but she was too proud to say so, and Clem was only too glad to pay off her former scorn of him by an equal measure of contempt.

"Now dis col'd gem'an am somebody, reckon dat yaller gal done been sorry case she didn't treat me bettah," he observed, complacently, "but now I don't care, an' ef dey wasn't no mo' gals in de worl' 'cept her, I wouldn't look cross-eyed at her."

Clem and his big watch and chain attracted a great deal of attention on the Nettlebone place the next day.

Its proud owner displayed that huge chronometer a dozen times in the course of the morning, ostensibly to learn the time of day, but really to exhibit his new acquisition.

The watch was not a bad one, and the case was of a good quality gold-plate, the chain being rolled, but that mattered nothing to him, since his treasure made as much show as the best Jurgenson ever made.

He went in for show, and it must be acknowledged that he had got it, in addition to a fairly decent watch, and as the church had made money out of the affair, there was really no cause for complaint on either side.

Yum was all broken up when he saw Clem haul out that big clock and consult it, and until he could obtain a similar one he felt that he had lost caste for ever.

Then envy took possession of him, and he remarked disdainfully in the hearing of his fellow-servants:

"H'm! Clemmy gottle gol' latch, so be; no good, allee same Clem; Yum no likee lass latch, no go, makee noise likee steam engine, den bleakee down."

"You'se jealous, dat's what's de mattah ob you," remarked Clem, with an upward twist of his flat nose.

"Youse be durn glad to weah dis watch on'y fo' a secon', ef I let youse."

For some time Clem sported that watch and chain until he began to make everybody sick.

He would haul it out on every possible and impossible occasion, and never lost an opportunity to compare the time with other watches, with the railroad time, with the town clock, and with the mill whistles.

He would like to have set the sun by that watch of his, and thought it the very best in all the world.

"May the devil floy away wid you an' yer big brass turnip!" cried Mrs. Rorarity one day when Clem told her the kitchen clock was not right.

"It don't take much to make fools of some folks," declared Peggy, "and if you had a dozen watches, all of 'em set with di'monds, you'd be nothin' but a big fool nigger after all."

"Faix, it's a pain in the back yez gives me," chimed in Pat, "wid yer stuck up ways. Begorrah, the president an' his wolfe couldn't pit an more lugs than yez does."

"Look out, Clem, pride goes before a fall," observed Timmy.

"Youse am all broken up on dat watch," snorted Clem, "an' you'se mad 'case yo' kan't hab one like it."

"Begorrah, I could git a bushel av that kolnd fur tin dollars," affirmed the housekeeper, "only I wouldn't demane meself be wearin' such rubbidge."

"Dat am sour grapes, chile. Yo'd be gladter if yo' could, but yo' kean't."

Every three or four nights, and particularly on Saturday nights, Clem would fix himself up in his



most gorgeous array, high collar, big watch, stunning chain and all, and go off, as he said, to see his best girl.

He did this to break Peggy up, and to put on airs, for he used to spend his evenings in a saloon in town run by a colored gentleman, where he would play poker and seven up till a late hour.

His story about his girl was all imagination, although he was looking out for a mash every chance he got.

The girls had to laugh so at his comical appearance, however, that they were ashamed to be seen walking with him, and so Clem got left every trip.

Well, he went on putting on the biggest kind of airs for about three weeks, until everybody was sick of it, and those quiet twins resolved to give him a sitting down.

One Saturday afternoon they met a party of four or five tramps on the road near the place.

It is likely enough that these wandering gentry would have tried to rob the twins if they had not been so near the house, but the boys knew this, and did not scare worth recording.

Approaching the disreputable gang, Timmy said, boldly:

"I say, do you fellows want to earn half a dollar apiece?"

"Yes; if you don't want us to cut wood," said one.

"Or dig a well," added another.

"Or do any kind of work at all," chorused the rest.

"Do you see that big nigger working over yonder?" asked Tim, pointing out Clem to the tramps.

"Yes, we see him, and if der wind was this way we might more than see him," laughed the spokesman for the crowd.

"Well, you want to hang around here to-night, and when that big coon goes to town waylay him."

"Do yer want him laid out?"

"No, you mustn't hurt him, but scare him into fits."

"Take that big watch away from him," added Jimmy.

"Yes, and his stunning clothes."

"And dress him up in one of your suits."

"Do we get the clothes?" asked the tramp.

"Yes, and half a dollar apiece."

"Now?"

"Not muchee, my friend," laughed Jimmy. "No work, no pay."

"And who gets de super and the cable?"

"The watch and chain?"

"Dat's de time o' day."

"Oh, you can draw lots for that. Take it away from him, that's all."

"And scare blazes out of him?"

"That's it."

"We'll do it, bet yer life!"

"Do so."

"What time does he start out?"

"About dark."

"And when'll you give us the boodle?"

"To-morrow morning."

"Before church, I suppose?" grinned the tramp.

"Tra-la-la, kids; we'll be there, you bet!"

The twins chuckled over their plan for taking the starch out of Clem, but told nobody about it, keeping the racket strictly quiet.

At the usual time Clem set out to see his girl, as he told all hands, gotten up more swellishly than ever.

He wore a pair of white duck trousers, a checked coat and vest, a shirt all blazoned with red and blue spots as big as a dollar, and with a collar that sawed his ears, a white hat, white cotton gloves, and the big watch.

"Luk at the big fool neow!" snorted Mrs. Roriarity. "Faix, ye'd think he war goin' to a weddin'."

"More likely to a funeral," chuckled the twins, aside.

"Guess dem folks wish dey could put on style like dis col'd pusson," muttered Clem conceitedly, as he strutted off.

The moon was up, and Clem had plenty of light until he had gone half a mile from the house.

Here he had to pass through a stretch of woods where it was rather dark, but, as he knew nothing of the presence of the tramps, he did not feel afraid.

Suddenly, as he was walking on, singing away for dear life, four men sprang out upon him from clumps of bushes on either side of the road.

"Yer money or yer life!"

"Stand and deliver!"

"Blood for blood!"

"We are the midnight avengers!"

Thus cried the four ruffians in tragic tones, and Clem began to shake in his shoes.

"I ain't got nuffin, gem'men, 'deed I habn't," he declared. "I'se on'y a po' niggah man what wo'ks fo' my libin'."

"Give us the ticker," cried the leader, giving Clem a poke in the stomach which doubled him up, and made him drop on his marrow bones.

In an instant the watch and chain were in the possession of the tramp.

Before Clem could wink a second tramp had pulled off his coat, while a third had his vest.

"Strip!" cried the tramp, "and be quick about it, too, or we'll fill you full o' holes."

Clem clasped his hands in an attitude of prayer, and looked at his captors as if he expected to be murdered.

"We'll give you just two minutes," cried the boss tramp, holding up Clem's watch.

"Oh, please, Marse Tramp, don' go fo' to kill dis po' col'd man!" cried Clem, kneeling in the dust, his hands clasped and the sweat rolling off him in torrents.

Then they all stood around in a threatening attitude, Clem trembling like a leaf.

"In two minutes you die!"

"Oh, de good Lawd please take cah ob dis niggah!" cried Clem, in an agony of fear.

"Come, hurry up!" cried the tramp, and Clem thought that the Angel Gabriel had called the turn on him for a dead certainty.

#### CHAPTER XVIII.

YES, Clem thought that his days on earth had come to an end when the four tramps stood over him on the lonely road with no one else nigh.

"Please, deah Mistah Tramp," he cried, "don' be hard on a po' col'd man what earns his libin' by de sweat ob him eyebrow."

"No back talk," cried the chief tramp. "Off with that barber-pole shirt. It's too giddy for a man of your age."

"Am youse gwine fo' to strip me to de skin, Marse Tramp?" pleaded Clem, appealingly.

Something cold pressed against the back of Clem's neck made him squirm and yell like mad.

"Shut up!" growled one of the tramps. "Come, get out of those breeches mighty quick if you don't want to climb the golden stairs."

Clem was so weak with fear that he flopped right over backwards and in a second all four tramps were sitting upon his prostrate form.

Then they proceeded to dispossess him of his gaudy shirt, his dandy trousers and his song and dance shoes, leaving him nothing but his underclothes.

Then one tramp pulled off his coat and took Clem's, another swapped vests with the coon, and another appropriated his shirt and pants, while the boss collared the watch and chain and shoes.

"Now you're all right," said the ring-leader, "so get up and dress."

"Does yo' tink I kin get into dem pants?" asked Clem, holding up a pair of ragged unmentionables which the first high wind would blow to pieces.

"Yas, of course. Fasten 'em with a clothes-pin if dey don't come together."

Poor Clem managed to squeeze into the clothes furnished by the tramps, and then they left him looking the very picture of distress.

"Dat am a nice suit to go to chu'ch in," muttered Clem, as he surveyed himself by the light of the straggling moonbeams.

Then he left the shade of the trees and sadly made his way toward home.

"It am lucky I've got some mo' close at home," he remarked, "else I'd never dare show myse'f 'mong 'spectable col'd folks ag'in."

He fondly imagined that he would get into the house and up to his room without being seen.

Those quiet twins had arranged a different programme, however.

All seemed quiet enough when that coon approached the back door, and he thought he would get in unseen.

He did get in, sure enough, but the very moment he shut the door a gong sounded, having been fixed by the boys.

Instantly the door leading to the servant's dining-room flew open, and all hands rushed out.

"Hollo, here's a tramp. Nab him!"

Clem was seized, dragged into the dining-room by a dozen willing jokers, and placed in the middle of the room, in full sight of all present.

"Why, it's Clem!"

"Hi-ya, lookee like tlamp, so be," giggled Yum Bung, dancing around like a monkey with spasms.

"Get on his nobby clothes."

"They fit him too quick."

"What's the time of day, Clem?"

"Be particular to notice the pants."

"Ash barrel style, fifty cents a gross."

Everybody had something to say, and poor Clem was the most abashed coon that ever was known.

"Fine masher you'd make."

"Couldn't mash a blind girl."

"Begorry, yez had ought to be ashamed av yesilf."

Clem had not enough pride left to blow up a penny balloon.

"Lemme go, chillen," he pleaded, "I'se been robbed by de tramps. 'Bout fifty ob dem waylaid me on be road, an' do' I knocked down half ob dem, de res' was too many fo' me."

"You don't say?"

"Sides dat, dey had resolvers, reg'lar sebenteen shooters, an' I couldn't stan' dem t'ings, ye know."

"A foine blower yez are," sneered Pat. "Begorrah, yez won't go puttin' on airs afther this."

Indeed he would not, but his cup of misery was not yet full by any means.

At that moment the twins and old Peter came into the room.

That was too much for Clem, and he would have been glad if there had been a trap under his feet which would let him into the cellar.

"Ain't you ashamed of yourself?" cried Mr. Nettlebone. "Go up-stairs to bed and don't you stir off the place for a week."

Clem slunk away abashed and all hands gave him the grand laugh as he went out.

His pride was all gone, and he put on no more airs, at least not for some time.

While the cure lasted, however, the others had a respite from his nonsense.

If Moses himself had come to town he would have yielded the palm of being the meekest man to Clem Brown of Carolina.

The tramps did not keep their appointment with the twins the next morning for a very good reason.

They were arrested by the town constables the night before, clapped into the lock-up and sent off to the county jail on Monday.

The stolen goods were recovered, and given over to

Mr. Nettlebone, but no one ever suspected the part those quiet twins had taken in the affair.

This time they took no one into their confidence, but kept the racket strictly to themselves.

Old Peter told Clem that his watch had been found, but ordered him most positively not to wear it except on Sundays, or unless by his special permission.

Clem dared not say no to this, for he was afraid of losing his job, having been threatened with discharge several times, and not knowing when the threat might be carried out.

He was cured of putting on airs for a time, and his companions had a rest at last.

Summer was now waning fast, and the twins, knowing that they would have to return to the city in a few weeks, determined to make the most of the time while it lasted.

Remembering the ghost trick they had once played on Yum, the boys now thought up another, which should shake that placid individual's equanimity and give him a first-class scare.

Uncle Peter had lately presented them with a very fine magic lantern which they had learned to use, but which no one had yet seen, as they were intending to give an exhibition shortly, and did not want any one to know about beforehand.

They now resolved to work this for all it was worth, and so fixed up a number of slides and made a hole in the partition of the room next to Yum Bung's, which was not at present with a tenant.

One evening as Yum entered his room to go to bed, dispensing with the luxury of a candle or any other light, he was surprised at the apparition of a big, black cat, with fiery eyes, sitting on the head-board of his bed.

"Hi-ya, what cattee do in loom?" he muttered. "No likee cattee, shoo!"

But the cat only rolled its eyes and elevated its back in a belligerent attitude.

"Cattee go lout; shoo, no wantee in loom."

Then the cat stood on its head and waved its tail, which seemed to grow bigger every second, until it resembled a hearse plume in size and appearance.

Yum was frightened, but he wasn't going to have that thing there, and so he made a dash at it.

In an instant the cat had disappeared, but while Yum stood there debating whether it had jumped out of the window or had gone under the bed, it suddenly appeared again on the pillow.

This time it stood on its hind legs and flourished two big revolvers, while it winked its flaming eyes in most terrible fashion.

"No shootie, good cattee, nicee cattee," said Yum, persuasively; but the cat only flourished those pistols more threateningly, and Yum got scared.

Darting outside and closing the door with a bang, he rushed down-stairs to the servants' hall, and said, excitedly:

"Come lup, cattee in loom, big cattee, got pistol, mean shootie, come lup."

All hands followed Yum Bung to his room, but, of course, nothing was to be seen, and the crowd had the laugh on the Chinaman.

"No sabe, cattee come, cattee go, no catchee on," he observed, when the procession had filed out, leaving him alone.

However, the coast was clear, at all events, and he proceeded to undress.

Suddenly that big black cat appeared on the wall opposite the window, turning somersaults and capering like a jumping-jack.

Yum threw his shoe at the creature, and it instantly sprang up to the ceiling and continued its antics there.

"How be?" inquired the puzzled Asiatic. "Cattee no fly, no walkee on loof lupside down, cattee falliee off."

Then that frolicsome cat danced from the ceiling to the bed, and then all around the walls, growing larger and larger, till it finally covered one entire side of the room, and had eyes as big as dinner-plates.

That was too much for Yum and he made a break, but, coming in line with the hole in the partition, he shut off the light, and the cat disappeared.

"Cattee flaid; think Yum pullee tall," he chuckled, as he went on with his disrobing.

He had taken off his white blouse and was about to hang it up when he came in line with the ray of light from the peep-hole.

"Whatee that?" he asked himself, as he saw a luminous spot in the center of the blouse.

At the next moment he saw a great number of creeping things on the blouse, all of them wiggling and squirming like so many serpents.

He gave a howl, threw the garment on the floor and began stamping on it most furiously.

"Yum clean, no gettee buggee, no gottee snake," he sputtered, dancing on that blouse which he thought infested with all sorts of horrible things.

He could not endure the thought that any vermin had visited his person, for he was as clean as wax, and so he stamped away, making up his mind to destroy the whole tribe.

Suddenly a ray of light struck him in the eye, and he thought he heard some one giggle.

The light went out in an instant, for the boys thought it was time to stop the show lest Yum should discover the secret.

He was very much puzzled, and he now lighted a candle and examined the room carefully.

There was no cat, there were no troublesome insects, and his blouse was as clean as soap and water could make it.

"No catchee on, no 'stand," he observed, but for all that he went to bed with the light burning and received no more unpleasant visitors.

Two or three nights after that the twins gave their magic lantern and stereopticon exhibition before all the members of the household.



Yum recognized his nocturnal visitors during the course of the show, and took a lofty tumble.

"Lillee bloys makee fool o' Yum," he grinned. "Thlow cattee on scleen, Yum figheten likee blazie." "Bet yo' life yo' don' scare me wif any ob yo' ol' cats," snorted Clem, who was beginning to get saucy again.

The next picture was that of a big darky carrying a huge gold watch, and then there appeared on the screen four tramps all armed with clubs.

The figure of the moke dropped on its knees, and then everybody laughed, and Clem kept his mouth shut for the rest of the evening.

"Guess we'll have to give that coon another shaking up," said Timmy to Jimmy later on.

"To take the nonsense out of him," responded Jimmy to Timmy.

"But when shall we do it?"

"Pretty soon."

The next day was warm and sultry, and Clem had no notion of working all day in the field if he could find a good place to take a nap.

In the afternoon, when it was hottest, he was out in a field where there was a large apple tree, which gave a most delightful shade.

It was not long before Clem found it convenient to work over in that part of the field.

After that it was an easy matter for him to stop and rest for a moment in the shade.

"Now dis am nice," he muttered, sitting on the grass with his back to the tree trunk.

It was so nice, in fact, that he began to make preparations for taking a snooze, having satisfied himself that there was no one in sight.

He had been spotted, however, by those quiet twins, who seemed to be always around when Clem did not care to have them.

Whispering a few words to each other, they hurried off to the house, leaving Clem in undisturbed possession of his cozy nook.

They knew that he would be there when they came back and so it proved.

Climbing into the tree without disturbing the now sleeping darky, and screened from observation by the thick foliage, Timmy put his plans in operation.

He let down on the end of a string one of those big black mechanical spiders that keep up such a jumping whenever they are agitated, until it was right in front of Clem's nose.

By shaking the string a little the toy was made to vibrate back and forth, and every time it swung in toward the tree it clawed that coon's proboscis.

This sort of business, kept up for a few minutes, caused Clem to awake, and as soon as he saw that big spider suspended right in front of him he let out a howl.

"G'way dar, shoo, get out," he yelled, making a pass at the insect with his big fist; "g'way dar, I tol' ye, an' let a po' man res'."

The spider now hovered right above Clem's head, out of reach, but that did not please him any more than the former arrangement.

"S'pose I wan' yo' up dar, ready to drop into my mouf de minute I gets to sleep?" he asked, addressing the dangling spider, which was shaking all its legs and seemed to be winking at him.

Then he rose to drive the thing away, but at that moment Timmy let it drop right on top of his bare head.

"Wow, ki-yi, gosh, get out!" he bellowed, throwing up both hands and beating a hasty retreat. "Specs I wan' dat t'ing on my head? No, sah, not a bit of it."

Timmy gave the spider a yank and hauled it up, and when Clem looked for it, after shaking his head and looking himself all over to see that it had not found a resting place somewhere in his clothes, it had disappeared.

"Golly! don' wan' no sech fellah as dat loafin' roun' me when I se tookin' a nap," he muttered, as he looked all around at the foot of the tree.

Satisfied that the thing would not come back, he now stretched himself out flat, with his head slightly elevated upon a moss-covered root.

It was not long before he was asleep and snoring.

"Let's give it to him," whispered Timmy.

"Shake the tree," added Jimmy.

And they did shake the tree with a vengeance.

The apples fell in a regular shower on and about Clem, waking him up again most effectually.

One thumped down on his nose, another bumped on his forehead, a little one went down into his mouth, and another whacked him on the eye.

He jumped up, the apples still falling, looked at the tree, and observed, somewhat puzzled:

"Pears to me de win' am blowing putty hard up dere in de tree-top fo' a fellah not to feel 'um down yer."

He had not seen the boys as yet, but he got out from under the tree in short order, preferring the hot sun to being bombarded with apples.

"Apples hab been de runations ob man eber since Adam and Ebe got full on apple-jack in de garden," he sagely observed. "Wha' yo' make hard cidah ob? Wha' folks get drunk on? Apples, to be shuah. Tol' yo' wha', apples am de destruction ob mankin' an' don' yo' disremember it. It's apples wha' gibs little boys de colic. Don' wan' nuffin mo' to do wif dat yer ol' apple-tree. I isn't sleepy, anyhow."

So he went off, and the boys, having lost the chance of getting any more fun out of him, slipped away without being discovered.

"Make so much fuss if dis chile wants ter took a little snooze," muttered Clem, in disgust, as he sweated away at his work. "Firs' a big spidah come down shakin' him nassy foots right afo' my mouf, an' den de apples lab to fall. Hain't heerd or seen a apple fall since I lef. H'm! dat am allus

de way. Ef I was to go back dar, dey fall agin by de bushel."

Later in the day it rained, and so Clem had a vacation from work, and as the next day was Sunday, his holiday was a long one.

The day was rather warm until about five o'clock, and then it grew so pleasant that Clem concluded to go for a stroll.

"Yo' wan' go fo' a walk, Chinyman?" he asked Yum, who had dressed himself like a regular swell.

"Which way go?"

"Down to de willage to see de gals. Tol' yo' what, I gibs yo' an interduckshion to de des' gal yo' eber seed."

"Yum likee mashee 'Melican gal, whitee gal, niggee gal, allee same."

"Wha' de mattah wif a nice col'd gal, hey? You'se kin' o' col'd youse'f. Yo' isn't raul white, yo' isn't."

"Bellee nicee man, Yum Bung, allee gals go crazy, thlow kissee, shakee hand. Bully boy, glassee eye, Yum Bung, so be."

"Wall, does yo' wante go down in de town wif me?"

"Clemmy no gettee in tubble? Alle time gettee left when go along o' Clemmy."

In fact, that had been the general experience of our Chinese friend, and he began to look with disfavor on any plan which included Clem.

"Why, it am good luck to hab me 'long o' yo', don' yo' know dat? Yo' kean't fin' sech a good-lookin' col'd man as me ev'y day fo' to walk out wif, I tol' yo'."

"All lite, Yum go along o' Clemmy; wait lillee bit."

"Why, yas, I se in no hurry, 'cause I se got to fix up mo' stylish dan dis, don' you know?"

They had had an early supper, as they usually did on Sundays, and it was not long before those two funny-looking dudes, gotten up to kill, sauntered off in the direction of the town.

"Guess Clem must be going to church," observed Timmy, catching sight of the comical couple.

"Not with Yum along, and that Chinaman never goes out alone."

"He might better, for Clem always gets him into trouble."

"Wonder what the special racket is to-night?"

"If there's anything funny taking place we don't want to miss it."

"That's so; let's go down-town later on."

Off went Clem and Yum, those of the servants that chanced to see them having a good laugh at the expense of the dizzy pair.

"Don' yo' mind 'em," snuffed Clem. "Dey is on'y sorry dat dey can't be so high-toned demselves."

Reaching the town, Clem struck for the main street, attracting the attention of the passers-by, of which there was a goodly number, the evening being so pleasant.

Presently he stopped on a corner, and, looking up and down, said suddenly:

"Dere's Clara Jefferson comin' up de street. Tol' yo' now, she am a daisy."

"Lellah gal gottee fiend," muttered Yum, following the direction of Clem's glance. "Clemmy catchee one, Yum catchee oth'."

"You'm right, Marse Yum, dere am jes' one apiece."

Two stunningly dressed darky girls now approached, and Clem lifted his hat gallantly.

"Good-ebenin', Miss Clara, 'bout's fine a ebenin's yo'll fin' dese days."

"Bery salubrious, Mistah Brown. Dis am my frien', Miss Phebe Jackson."

"Pleased to make yo' 'quaintance. Dis am Mistah Yum, 'om de plantation. He am a Chinyman, but he am good comp'ny, I tol' yo'."

Both ladies giggled and bowed, and then Clem, having broken the ice, said:

"Don' yo' wante lemonade down de street, ladies, dis pleasant ebenin'?"

"You'se 'bery kin', Mistah Brown," said the blushing Clara, but we'se been expectin' two gemmen fo' some time, an' dey might—"

"Yo' don' mean dat no 'count Rafe Tompkins, what's hangin' roun' youse'?"

"Yas, an' Mistah Bullwagon."

"Pete Bullwagon! He am no good. Come 'long, don' wait fo' no sech trash as dem."

Then Clem hooked on to Miss Clara, while Yum offered his arm to her companion, and the two couples started off, Clem in the lead.

They made a fine appearance, the four of them, and people just stared as they passed by.

"I reckon we is putty swellish," muttered Clem, complacently.

"Belly ntes, takee care," acquiesced Yum Bung.

Oh, yes, they made a daisy show, but there was trouble ahead for Clem for skipping off with another man's girl.

Just now all was serene; but it was only the calm before the storm.

#### CHAPTER XIX.

At the end of the last chapter we left Clem Brown and Yum Bung promenading along the main street of the town with two stylish colored girls, and attracting general attention.

They were destined to attract still more, and to receive certain other attentions not as agreeable.

As they walked down the street, up came two colored individuals gorgeously attired, looking for their partners.

The gentlemen were Mr. Rafe Tompkins and Mr. Peter Bullwagon, claimants for the hands and companionship of the two ladies of color.

When they saw the aforesaid ladies walking with Clem and Yum Bung their optics became ensanguined in the short space of time known as a brace of shakes.

Instantly rumors of war began to float through the air, and the brewing of trouble began in hot earnest.

The two rivals paused in front of the festive group and glared.

Then Mr. Peter Bullwagon, giving a hitch to his spotted cuffs, delivered himself thusly:

"Phebe Jackson, I fink youse orter be 'shamed ob youse'f fo' spo'tin' roun' wif a Chinyman."

To which his companion added in a tone meant to be freezingly ironical:

"Clara Jefferson, don' you look pretty walkin' wif dat big moke! Yo' must feel awful proud dis minute."

"G'way, chile, you'se too num'ous," said Clem, disdainfully.

"Niggie man too muchee flesh, sabe?" added Yum.

"I se too num'ous, is I?"

"Fink me too fresh, hum?"

"Le's clean out the hull crowd, Rafe."

"Right yo' is, Peter. Wha's my razor?"

The ladies screamed and quickly uncoupled from their partners in trouble.

"I se only foolin' all de time, Rafe," cried Clara.

"Jes' leadin' 'em on fo' a joke, dat's all, Petey," quickly explained Plebe.

"Reckon it won' be much ob a joke fo' some pahties."

"Guess dey'll wish dey'd stayed to hum dis aftah-noon."

Then those angry coons went on the war-path forth-with.

They sailed in with everything set and the colors nailed to the mast.

They mauled, they hauled, they tugged and they lugged, and for a few moments nothing could be seen but flying arms and legs.

Clem and Yum were getting the worst kind of a racket, and certainly wished, as their rivals had said, that they had remained quietly at home.

At last the storm passed, and left those two worthies shipwrecked and dilapidated.

When the little unpleasantness was over there sat Clem and Yum on the edge of the walk facing each other, and looking mean enough to club themselves.

In the distance were seen the rival coons, walking away with the ladies on their arms.

Those perfidious damsels were actually waving their giddy handkerchiefs at the discomfited pair, as if the settling they had received was not quite sufficient.

Certainly those two unfortunates were in a most demoralized state.

Yum's white hat hung about his neck like a collar, his queue stood up straight, and his clothes looked as if they had been sent to the mill and ground up for paper pulp.

Clem looked no less disreputable, for he had been considered the chief offender, and had suffered accordingly.

His hat was torn, his coat split in two, his high collar a mass of strings, his shoes split from toe to heel, his vest a ruin, there was a lump on his forehead as big as a walnut, one eye was closed and his nose was twice its usual size.

And there the two sat looking at each other as if to inquire what it all meant anyhow.

"Am de trouble ober wif?" asked Clem at length.

"Yum Bung allee bloke up, same likee steam loller go over him," commented the Celestial.

"Didn' know dey war gwine to get de whole willage to help um," remarked the moke. "Reckon I could lick dem two fellahs, but I didn' speck dey was gwine fo' to fotch a dozen to help."

"Clemmy heap big jackass," sneered Yum. "Two niggee bleakee up hull cloud. Clemmy lie!"

"Wondah ef I se all here?" observed Clem, as he picked himself up with some difficulty.

"Takee home in feelballow, packee up in hanky-chief," suggested Yum, as he pulled himself into shape.

Then the two ruins started off for home, one behind the other, as if ashamed to be seen together.

And of course those quiet twins must appear on the scene when Clem wished them a thousand miles away.

"Hallo, Clem, been caught in a north-easter?"

"Why, Yum, have you been fooling with a buzz saw?"

Such were the greetings with which the twins received the duo of heroes.

"Lillee bloy talkee too much, more better keepee kilet," muttered Yum.

"Keep yo' mouf shet, chillen; yo' mought say suf-fin' yo' shouldn'," suggested Clem, as he strode grandly by.

The boys were not to be put down, however, and they indulged in the most hilarious mirth as the procession moved on.

"Guess Clem must have struck a snag at low tide and run aground."

"Yum looks as if he'd been sent through a washing machine running at full speed."

Then both boys laughed, and of course that made Clem and the Chinaman feel better than ever.

"Ef I had my way, dem boys go off to York to-morrow mo'nin' fo' shuah!"

"Lillee bloy gettee club, Yum likee belly much."

The boys were on their way to evening church, and when they entered and took their places in the choir they looked as innocent as two cherubs.

Again their sweet singing attracted universal admiration, and people wondered why such lovely boys were not taken straight up to glory instead of being made to dwell in this cold, unfeeling world.



Very likely the aforesaid cold, unfeeling world would have had the ticket if the twins had been asked to name their choice.

The members of the choir were not disposed to regard them with such high-flown admiration, for various reasons.

In the first place, the boys could sing and the choir could not, although they labored under the erroneous impression that they could discount the seraphim and cherubim in that particular respect.

In the next place, the boys had the cream of the solo singing, which had formerly fallen to the lot of soprano and tenor, and those two individuals were in nowise propitiated by that little circumstance.

Then people always came to evening services after the boys began to sing, while previous to that the attendance had greatly resembled a game of base-ball—to wit: three out, all out.

After this particular evening the members of the choir had more reason than ever to wish that the boys had never been let loose upon the town.

For instance, when the tenor arose and began to sing:

“There’s a bright, shiny spot,”

his wig suddenly flew off, disclosing the locality of the spot, his head being as bald as an egg.

The wig was recovered, and the congregation supposed that its curls had become entangled in the soprano’s lace shawl, and tittered accordingly.

The fish-hook which had been the primary cause of the sudden divorce of head and wig was of course not visible to the people below.

Nor was it seen by those up-stairs, owing to the adroitness and rapidity with which Timmy—the party most responsible in the little transaction—had whisked it out of sight.

But that was not all that happened to the choir that Sunday evening.

The soprano, shaking out her flounces and ruffing up her stone-wall bang, had just sailed in with the declaration:

“Hark, I hear those angel voices,”

when the liveliest caterwauling that was ever heard made itself manifest in the organ-loft, and drowned all other sounds.

The soprano was knocked out in the first round and sat down, the basso, meanwhile, investigating the cause of the trouble, and finding two big bruisers of cats having it hot and heavy in the narrow space behind the organ.

Of course no one knew how the animals got there, or, at least, no one told.

Probably if the white-headed boy who did the pumping for the organ had been offered sufficient inducement he might have told how the twins had bribed him to introduce the cat obligato at a favorable moment; but he was not approached, and so the incident now goes on record for the first time.

After the squelching of the two chief singers the boys came in for their innings and sent everybody home happy, not including the choir, however.

That body of indignant brothers and sisters held an informal jubilee after the conclusion of the services, and resolved to go on strike at once and forever if those quiet twins were allowed to sit with them again.

The boys probably got wind of it somehow or another, for the next Sunday they sat in the body of the church.

The choir did not have so much of a picnic of it as they thought they were going to have, though, for right in the midst of a soprano solo the organ suspended operations, and the singer was stranded on the top of a high note and stopped short, feeling like a fool.

Then two boyish voices, blending together like one, took up the broken chord and carried the anthem through to the end, without accompaniment, the congregation listening spell-bound.

After that the boys were requested to sit with the singers as before, and there was no more trouble.

About this time Clem was deputed to do a job of whitewashing, being considered just the right man to carry out such an undertaking.

The kitchen was the first place to be decorated, and two high step-ladders were brought out, a board placed between them and Clem set to work.

“Guess I knows sumfin’ bout dis yer kin’ ob wo’k,” declared Clem, as he dipped his brush into the pail and began lathering the wall.

Just then, however, one of the ladders slipped, or was jolted by one of the servants, for Clem had a large and appreciative audience.

Down went the board at one end, and down came Clem, as a natural consequence, sitting in the pail of whitewash.

Then he slid down the incline against his own inclinations, bringing up against the ladder.

“Who do dat?” he sputtered, rescuing himself from a watery grave at the bottom of the pail, the whitewash running off him in rivulets.

“Hi, ya, Clemmy whitee washee seat o’ bleeches, got big job,” laughed Yum Bung, who was present, of course.

Then he wished that he had kept still, for Clem grabbed his brush and frescoed the top of Yum’s head half an inch thick with whitewash.

“Faix, he looks loike a frosted cake,” laughed Mrs. Roriarity as Yum went dancing away.

“Or loike the top av a hill in the winther toime,” added Pat.

“I makes a white man out ob him ef yo’ gibs me time,” roared Clem, opening his big mouth. “Golly, how him jump! He never be as white as dat befo’. Guess it do him good.”

“Faix, ye’d better not be dribblin’ whotevash all over the flure,” expostulated the cook. “Clane yesilf

off, you omadhaun. Who wants to be scrubbin’ up after yez, I’d loike to know?”

“Specs I sat down in de bucket a pupus, didn’ youse? Who mobe de laddah? Some folks donno nuffin’ aftah you tell ’em. Neber did see sich ign’ant folks in all my bo’n days, nebah.”

Then Clem scraped the white off of his overalls, fixed his ladders and plank and got to work again.

This time he was not interrupted, for the fate of Yum Bung had given the rest a lesson, and they let the big moke alone after that.

When the kitchen had been done there was a barn which claimed the attention of the artist, and Clem took his pails and brushes outside.

Ropes had been made fast to cleats fastened in the roof, and a ladder covered with boards was swung, and was now all ready for Clem’s accommodation.

Stepping on this, he began fixing his pails in a good place so that they might not be upset, stooping over at his work.

He had no thought for anything else, and so did not notice what those jokers were about.

“Hoist away!” he yelled, as he straightened himself up.

And they did hoist away for a fact, as Clem speedily found out.

The tackle had been fastened to his belt, however, and in an instant he was lifted off his feet and hung suspended.

“Lemme down; hi dar, leggo, dis yer belt am a gib-in’ way!” he yelled. “Does yo’ wante smash me all up?”

It would naturally require a pretty heavy belt to hold up a man as heavy as Clem, and, as he anticipated, the attachment quickly gave way and let him down.

He came down, spread-eagle style, his face in one pail of whitewash and his right hand in another.

Then he got up, ready for vengeance, but he looked so funny that all hands roared with laughter.

“Making a white man of yourself, eh, Clem?” inquired Mr. Joy.

“Faix, it ’ud take a hogshead av plaster to do that,” cried Pat, “since a bucket isn’t enough for his face.”

“Look at de white-faced babboon,” laughed Peggy.

“Better put him in de museum.”

“Wonderful curiosity, just imported from Hoboken,” cried Timmy. “Come up and see it, as it goes on the road in a few days.”

“Don’ youse fink you’m mighty smaht?” snorted Clem. “Ef I had no mo’ brains dan youse, I sell myse’f out fo’ a yaller dog.”

That made the crowd laugh all the more, for Clem was a sight to cause a mummy to giggle.

Imagine a big darky with neck and arms as black as ebony, and with a face and one hand as white as chalk, and you will have some idea of how he looked.

“Ef I cotch de fellah what do dis, I jes’ souse him head fust into de bucket an’ keep him dere,” declared Clem, wiping off one side of his face on his shirt-sleeve.

With his face one half black and the other half white, Clem looked more ridiculous than ever, and the spectators fairly howled where before they had only tittered.

“Come up and see the wonderful transformation from white to black without the artist leaving the stage,” cried Timmy.

“The only man who performs the act successfully,” added the other twin.

“Specs yo’ finks I’s a big fool, don’ yer?” growled Clem, as he wiped off the other side of his face.

“How’d you guess it so quick?” cried both the boys in a breath.

“Begorry, yez had better go to work an’ not be wasthin’ the whitewash, or the masther ’ll be after yez,” suggested Pat.

“Who done de wastin’, I’d like to know?” demanded Clem, indignantly. “Did I done drop myse’f into de bucket? Why don’ yo’ talk sense, honey? Guess you am off yo’ base dis mo’nin’.”

All hands laughed at this, but then, for fear that Mr. Nettlebone might possibly come along and catch them loafing, they went away, leaving two of their number to help Clem.

That laughing moke now proceeded with his artistic labors, while the twins started off into the woods to look at their snares.

When they returned, just before dinner, they found Clem standing in the shade of the barn, his work being finished and he himself anxious for grub to be announced.

Hurrying into the kitchen, they proceeded to tell the queen of that establishment a plan they had, and she listened to it eagerly.

When Clem sat down in his usual place he found a big deep-dished pie, nicely browned and smoking hot, sitting in front of his place.

“Wha’ dis?” he inquired, regarding the dish with looks of tender affection.

“Faix, it’s a poie—a mate poie that the masther was after tellin’ me I should make for ye,” responded the cook.

“De boss tol’ yo’ to make a pie fo’ me?” asked Clem, opening his eyes till they were as big as butter plates.

“That’s phat I’m tellin’ yez.”

“Wha’ fo’ he do dat?”

“Because yez does yer wurruk so foine. Faix, he’ll be axin’ yez to do the parlors next, fur he says yer whitewashin’ bates the friscoes all holly.”

“Don’ I tol’ yo’ I knowed how to do dat kin’ ob a job?” cried Clem, sitting down. “Wall, I should twitter, honey. De boss knowed it, too, ’case he tol’ de cook to make me a pie all by myse’f.”

“Faix, yez’ll be after giving us a taste, won’t yez?” asked Pat.

“What yo’ put in dat pie, missis?” asked Clem.

“Oh, iverythin’ phat’s nice.”

“Chicken?”

“Faith, I did.”

“An’ liver?”

“Half a pound av it.”

“An’ sassengers?”

“Whistle to it and see if I didn’t.”

“Any inyuns?”

“Begorrah, yez might smell thim without axin’ me that.”

“An’ sage an’ all dem t’ings.”

“Faith, it’s spoiled up to the taste av an ipecure, if yez knows phat that is.”

“Yum-yum, dat am de way to make a pie,” muttered Clem, smacking his lips, drawing his chair closer, and picking up his knife and fork.

Then they all got at him for a taste of that wonderful pie.

“Won’t you give us a bite, Clem?”

“Just to taste it, you know.”

“You can’t ate the hull av it.”

“You’ll be sick if you do.”

“G’way dar!” cried Clem, sticking out his elbows.

“De res’ ob you’s hab lots ob t’ings. Dis am mine, and de boss don’ like it ef I gibs any ob it away.”

“Will that be all yez’ll want?” asked Mrs. Roriarity, as she began helping the others.

“Yas’m, I fink when I gets away wif dis dat I won’ wan’ no mo’.”

“Faix, if ye do, I think it will be quite sufficient.”

All hands now began eating, and Clem cut into the top of his pie, the crust collapsing in an instant.

Then from the interior came an odor not at all savory, and everybody stopped work and looked interested.

Clem leaned over the table and looked into the dish.

It contained nothing but a couple of quarts of whitewash.

The crust had been baked and then laid over the top of the dish so as to deceive Clem and the others who were not in the secret.

“Fo’ de land sakes, what am dis?” cried Clem, aghast.

“Ye said yez wur fond av whitewash, an’ so I thought I’d give yez some for yer dinner.”

Such was the answer that Mrs. Roriarity made, and everybody laughed.

“You don’t want anything else, do you?” asked one.

“Wouldn’t give us any, eh? Serves you right.”

“Begorrah, yez’ll not git a shmell av me dinner now for yer gradiness.”

Clem looked at the bogus pie in disgust, and then munched away on the crust.

“Is dat all I git fo’ dinnah?” he asked.

“Faith, ye said ye’d be satisfied wid it.”

“Yo’ s’pec’s I eat whitewash?”

“Be the powers, ye had yer nose in a pail av it this mornin’, and seemed to enjoy it.”

“Niggee man eat lail-load tacks, eatee whitee washee, eatee anysing,” chuckled Yum. “No makee fuss; pie good—belly nice.”

“G’long wif youse,” muttered Clem. “Specs I don’ eat rats, anyway. Dis am a put-up job.”

“Yez can put it down, thin,” grunted the cook.

“Anything is good enough for common niggers,” snapped Peggy, the chambermaid.

“Don’ youse rouse me, chillen,” said Clem, “’cause I’s ead when I’s ead.”

“Go tell that to Pete Bullwagon,” laughed Peggy, and then they all joined in.

Meanwhile they were all eating away for dear life, while Clem had nothing, and that made him madder than ever.

“Don’ I get nuffin’ dis trip?” he asked.

“Faix, ye moight if yez had wanted to share the poie wid the rest, but now yez can’t have nuthin’ jist for yez bein’ a pig.”

And he didn’t get anything, either, until everybody had finished and left the table, chaffing him till he was as mad as a hornet.

However, having thoroughly enjoyed the joke which the twins had put her up to, the good-natured housekeeper now brought on Clem’s dinner, and gave him all the more for having kept him waiting so long for it.

Clem was all smiles and grins again after this, but the joke was not yet under.

When he had about half finished, Mr. Nettlebone passed the open door of the dining-room, looked in and paused.

“Well, Clem,” he said, “for a man that does as little work as you do, you manage to eat a lot. Here you are at your dinner yet when everybody else has been at work twenty minutes.”

Then he passed on without waiting for an explanation, while Clem remarked, sadly:

“Dat am always de way in dis worl’. De mo’ yo’ do, de leas’ praise yo’ gits fo’ it. Dat ol’ man jes’ done took away my appetite wid his ’marks, but I’ll eat now jes’ fo’ to spite him.”

## CHAPTER XX.

THE boys made it all right for Clem with Uncle Peter, and the good old man laughed heartily when told how Clem had been imposed upon.

So long as he was not discharged from his soft job, Clem did not care particularly how much he was fooled, and he laughed off this adventure as he had laughed off others before it.

“Tol’ yo’ wha’ I’d like mos’ ob all,” he remarked, one night, as he saw a horse and wagon drive by, “and dat’s ter get eben wif dat coon.”

The coon was Pete Bullwagon, the fellow who had helped to pulverize Clem and Yum the night they went out walking with the two brunettes.



"Ef I was to fall on dat coon, he be smashed, but I'se 'fraid he jump 'side, an' den I on'y has my fall fo' nuffin' an' hurts myse'f."

He meant to get even with the fellow, however, for the licking he had received, and he began busying his brain to find out some good way of doing so.

"What Pete Bullwagon doin' in dis part ob town, anyhow?" Clem asked himself. "He nebah come up dis way afo', and dat hoss b'long to 'noder man dan wha' he work fo'."

Just then along came another darky with another horse and wagon and going in the opposite direction.

Both drivers reined up and prepared to exchange compliments and swop lies.

"H'lo, Mistah Bullwagon, where's yo' gwine dis ebenin'?"

"Down de road a piece fo' ol' Jones what own dis hoss, and den back to hum."

"Any news, sah?"

"No, sah, 'cept dat Cla' Jer'son's run away wif de coachman at de squire's."

"G'long, Petey! yo' don' tol' me so! Wha' she see in dat niggah?"

"Donno. G'long dar, animile. 'Spec's I wante stop yer all night?"

The two friends passed each other, and Clem remarked to himself:

"Ef Pete Bullwagon am gwine on to de nex' house, reckon he stop and get b'ilin' at de tavern undah de hill, an' when he come back yer he don' know nuffin'."

Clem then seemed to be struck with an idea, not a common event, by any means, and he went off to find Yum.

He found that giddy Celestial trying to read a spellin'-book upside down, Yum having already expressed a desire to "lead book, allee same oder man."

"Does yo' 'membah de fellah what s'prised us de time we went out walkin' wif de col'd ladies?" asked Clem.

Yum smiled like a sick cat at the recollection of that most pleasant evening.

"Yeppee, Yum allee bloke up, niggee man hab heaby flis'."

"Don' yo' wante get eben on dat fellah?"

"Yum likee punch him head, make nose led, makee eye blackee."

"Den yo' do 'membah de 'casion?"

"Membee niggee man, no membee anysling else; likee puttee tin eye on niggee man, so be."

"Dat's de kin' ob talk, my frien'. Yo' has de true spo'tin' blood in youse."

"Clemmy see niggee man go 'long load, dlivin' lagon?"

"Dat's de fellah?"

"Where go?"

"Down de road a bit."

"Niggee man come back?"

"Spec so."

"Yum go fo' niggee man den."

"An' I help yo'. Come 'long, yo' ol' pig-tail, an' we'se'll jes' pa'lyze Mistah Petey when he come back."

Then the two marvels went out to the road, and down a piece till they came to a bit of woods.

Here they waited for Mr. Bullwagon to put in an appearance.

The moon was up before he did so, and then he was loaded.

He had taken more than one nip at the place under the hill, and the stuff was beginning to nip him.

"Dere he am, as full as a tick," observed Clem, as a horse and wagon hove in sight at the top of the hill.

The horse was a big, white, raw-boned animal, with a tail like a dilapidated paint-brush, and ears like wings.

He had a big head, a long neck, heavy shoulders, lantern jaws, and ribs which seemed on perpetual strike.

Big as he was, his harness hung loosely on him, the collar seeming to have a constant tendency to slip over his head.

The wagon was an old rattle-trap and jumped, jolted and bounced at every motion of the gaunt animal drawing it.

Mr. Bullwagon held the reins loosely, the white steed taking his own time and finding his way at leisure, knowing more, in fact, just then, than the driver.

"We won' g'home till mo'nin'," sang Peter, as he came along.

"Yo' 'll be lucky ef yo' gets home at all, my frien'," chuckled Clem, rolling up his sleeves.

"Niggee man dlunk, no can help heself," smiled Yum, sticking his pig-tail under his hat.

Pretty soon the horse and wagon reached the spot where Clem was waiting.

"Whoa, mule!" cried the grinning moke, taking Dexter by the bridle.

"Who dat?" asked Peter, as he nearly fell off the seat from the abruptness of his halt.

"Dat am me, sah, an' I'se gwine to lick youse."

"Yo' kean't do it, Clem Brown, ef yo' is as big as de ch'n'ch."

"Step down yer, den, an' see ef I kin or not."

Mr. Peter Bullwagon endeavored to comply with this polite invitation.

Instead of stepping, however, he rolled down and fell in a heap at the side of the road.

Then Clem and Yum proceeded to sweep the highway with him in revenge for their own previous hard treatment.

Peter's coat was torn from his back, his hat was lost, and he was anything but the dandy coon he usually was.

All this time the big white horse stood patiently by the side of the road waiting for the funny business to be over.

This gave Clem an idea, and not a bad one, either.

"Look yer, Mistah Bung," he said to the Chinaman, "jes' yo' unhitch dat 'ere festive animile."

"Takee out hossee?" grinned Yum.

"Dat am de talk."

"Gib niggee man lide?" continued Yum, unhitching the traces.

"Yas'r. Jes' yo' fin' de hitchin' strap firs' ob all."

"Gibbee niggee man lickin'?" queried Yum, with a chuckle. "Dat belly nicee, so be."

"Neber yo' min' wha' I do wif um, jes' yo' fin' um," ordered Clem, planting his big foot on the seat of Mr. Bullwagon's trousers, just to keep him quiet.

Yum found the strap, and then, while Clem held the trembling moke, the Chinaman, at his comrade's suggestion and advice, bound the captive's wrists firmly together in front of him.

The other end of the strap was secured to the stump tail of the big white nag.

"Him hab to took de hoss home," observed Clem, "else he get 'colder."

That big moke meant to choose his own route, however, and so, instead of turning the animal loose in the road, he made Yum Bung take down a section of the rail fence that skirted the highway.

Then he gave old Whitey a stinging crack on the flank and started him off on a regular gallop.

Away went that lumbering, animated bone heap through brush and brier, dragging the unfortunate Mr. Bullwagon after him.

Over fallen logs, through bog and brake, over stones and mud he went, Peter following whether he would or not.

The harness dragged behind, and now and then would catch in something and fetch Whitey up with a jerk.

Then he would snort and kick and finally get free, generally giving Peter a taste of his hoofs before extricating himself.

Oh, it was a dandy ride home that Peter was having, and he was aching to have it last all night, of course.

If it hadn't been for the moon he might have broken his neck a dozen times in half that number of minutes.

Now and then Whitey would stop, and then Peter would try to get his hands loose.

This would cause him to tug at the strap, and as the nag's tail was tender at the roots, he naturally objected.

He would snort and kick, and start on again, and Peter would be obliged to take up his weary march again.

"I'll knock de liber out ob dat big niggah fo' dis, ef I cotch him," he muttered.

But that didn't tie him loose for a cent, and all his threats were just then in vain.

When that hapless coon set out on his travels across country at the tail of the big white horse Clem and Yum watched his progress with a great deal of interest.

"Ho-ho, dat coon am habin' a fuss-class race, but he allus be jes' a length behin' de fav'ite."

"Bleak him neckee on ee stone, so be, bus' him bilee, hap."

"G'long dar, yo' common white niggah. Yo's makin' a bettah record now dan yo' eber made afo'."

Peter and the white horse soon got beyond the sound of their tormentors' voices, however, so that that much was spared them, at all events.

Then Clem and Yum fixed things up to look as if an accident had happened.

Together they turned the shaky old wagon and rolled it half way through the gap in the fence.

Then Clem jammed a rail up through the bottom, and the deed was done.

"Spec anybody see dat dey say dat drunken nig-gah lose de road an' drive 'cross lots froo' de wood."

"Yum feel bettee now, allee same likee boss loostee, killee oder loostee."

"Yo' am de cock ob de walk, allus 'ceptin' me," remarked Clem, patronizingly. "Reckon we two fel-lahs take de cake dis time."

"Yeppee, Yum takee cookee eby time. Yum bully bloy, glasse eye. Hi-ya!"

"We'm bofe ob us bully boys, yo' ol' headen. Come, les' hab a smile."

Then they went off under the hill and relaxed their features several times before going back home.

When they did so they were mildly hilarious, but as Mr. Nettlebone had gone to bed, and the twins were not around, they got into the house without a reprimand.

The other servants had to have their fling at them, of course, but then that was a matter of every day occurrence.

"Luk at ther naygur an' ther Chinayser," muttered Mrs. Rorarity, cocking her pug nose in the air. "It's a purty pair they air."

"Comin' home drunk, jess like two loafers," added Peggy. "Somebody ought to tell de master."

"Faix, they has to dhrink together, bekase nobody will dhrink wid thim," put in Pat.

"Oh, they'd do it fast enough if they were asked," added Mr. Joy, leaving Pat in doubt whether the remark was a ding at him or at the twin beauties.

"Don' drink wif white folks," sniffed Clem, loftily.

"I draws de line at Chinyans."

"Begob, de line had betther be dhrawn around yer own bull neck, Misther Clem, an' tight, too, be the same token."

"Dat am all right, Mistah Irish," retorted Clem. "S'pecs I'd orter be hung, p'rhaps, but dat am too good fo' youse."

"G'long with yez, ye nagur!"

"Does yo' know wha' yo' orter get, sah?"

"I do not, faith."

"Yo'd orter be kicked to deff by a donkey, an' darn me ef I wouldn' like ter do it."

This double-meaning sally of the coon's produced a grand laugh, and Clem stumbled off to bed while Yum stuck his head under the pump to sober up.

Mr. Peter Bullwagon reached home late that night, more by good luck than by adroit execution.

The white nag led him a jolly dance of it across country, and finally landed him in a ditch, the strap parting with a sudden snap.

Whitey got into the road through a hole in the fence, and finally brought up in his master's stable, considerably used up, to be sure, but nowise injured.

Peter got his hands free after a tussel, and then set out for home.

He got there along toward morning, and entertained a more respectful opinion of Clem than formerly.

He had intended to lick the big moke single-handed, but he now concluded to obtain some assistance for the job.

"I gets eben wif dat big niggah yet," he muttered, "ef it take all de col'd pop'lotion ob de town."

The next day the wagon was found, and Peter received all the blame of the accident, as it was thought to be, and he concluded to take it and hold his mouth for the time being, at the same time watching for a good chance to get square.

The twins, of course, knew nothing of the way in which Clem had avenged himself on Peter Bullwagon, but, quite in the way of business, prepared a nice little job for their colored friend the next day.

It would not have been in the nature of things for them to let any considerable time elapse without working off some joke on Clem or Yum Bung, or both.

Therefore, they put their clever young noddles in communication and thought up a snap that was warranted to strip the pendant draperies from the shrubbery, or, in good English, to take the rags off the bush.

Procuring a mechanical snake from a toy shop, they placed it under Clem's plate at breakfast the next morning.

"Wha' yo' got to eat this mornin', missis?" the coon asked, as he sat down.

"Faix, don't ask questions, but ate what's set before yez," was the ungracious answer.

Then Clem lifted up his plate, and the snake began to uncoll.

That huge darky jumped back at least two feet, his eyes as big as saucers, his teeth chattering and his hair standing on end.

"Fo' de land sakes, wha' dat?" he ejaculated.

"Phat's phat? I see nothin'."

"Clemmy gottee bugs," snickered Yum Bung.

"Phat's atin' ye, sure?" asked Pat.

All this time the snake was moving around in front of Clem in the most life-like manner.

"Who put dat snake undah my plate?"

"That what?"

"Where's the snake? I don't see it."

"Clemmy clazy dlunk, so be."

"Take dat away, I tol' yo'. Specs I wante eat sech t'ings?"

Everybody saw the snake, of course, though no one had known before that it was there.

However, they all tumbled, and determined to keep up the joke.

Clem went to brush the thing away, and it appeared to jump at him, the springs being loosened.

He sprang backwards, overturned his chair, let out a yell and fled to the other end of the room.

"Don' yo' fink you'm smaht, puttin' dat nassy fling undah my plate, hey?" he asked.

"Faix, there's nothin' there. Sit down and ate yer breakfast an' don't be kapin' the table waitin'."

"Dey ain't nuffin' dere, isn't dey, h'm?"

"No."

"I know bettah."

"Well, there isn't."

"Dey ain't no snake on de table-cloff, right in front ob my plate?"

"Deed an' there isn't."

"Clemmy dlunk, gottee jams, see snake," laughed Yum Bung.

Then they all got at him in chorus.

"Told you that you'd get 'em some day, Clem, if you drank so much."

"That's for staying out so late at night and drinkin' gin."

"Luk at him now, begorry! He's frothin' at the mouth."

"See how wild his eyes is."

"Chuck a pail of water over him."

"Tie him up to the hitching-post, or he'll bite."

"Tol' yo' dere war a snake dere," protested Clem, "an' I'se gwine to kill um; so dere!"

Then he hurried out, and presently came back with a club as big as a small tree.

Meanwhile the jokers had whisked away the toy snake, and all hands were busy at their meal when Clem returned.

"Where dat snake?" he asked. "Jes' wait till yo' see me pa'lyze um."

"Oh, ye're dhramin', sure. There's no snake at all. Go an' soak yer head an' yez'll fale betther."

Sure enough, there was no snake, and Clem was disgusted.

He had meant to show his prowess, and now there was no chance to do so.

Sitting down and placing the club across his knee, he attacked his breakfast, and was creating great havoc among the edibles, when he felt a tickling sensation in his foot.

Pat, who sat next to him, had dropped the toy snake into his capacious shoe, the top being wide enough for one to run his hand down.

"What dat 'ere?" cried Clem, pushing back.

Then he saw the head of the snake sticking out at the top of his shoe.



"Fo' goodness' sakes! I hab got um fo' sho'!" he yelled, jumping up.

"Got what?" asked all hands.

"Snakes in my boot. 'Clar' to gracious, I on'y had free drinks las' night and two de day befo'."

As he gave a yank at his shoe to pull it off the snake slipped down under his foot, and the poor moke was in terror.

"Take him off, take him off—he bite me fo' sho'!" he yelled.

Then he rolled over on the floor, and Pat, Mr. Joy, and two or three others sat on him and yanked off his shoe.

They were laughing to kill themselves, and just then the twins stuck their heads in at the door to see what the matter was.

"Clem got a fit?" asked Timmy.

"Or eaten too much?" added Jimmy.

"No, but he's got snakes."

Then the ravenous reptile was produced.

"You're all right now, Clem," said Mr. Joy, getting up.

"Don't yez think we'd better pump him out?" asked Pat, mischievously.

"Perhaps we had."

"Go get the stomach-pump from the office, Jim," said Timmy.

"All right, my boy."

This was too much for Clem, and he struggled to his feet, overturning Pat.

"Don' yo' do dat," he sputtered. "Specs I'se gwine to lose all dat good breakfas'? No, sab."

"There's yer snake, ye chuckle-headed idjit!" said Mrs. Roriarity.

So saying, she held it up before Clem, the springs having now all unwound.

Even Clem could not fail to see that the thing was a self.

He realized that he had again been made the victim of a practical joke.

He was determined not to give in, however, and so said, stoutly:

"H'm! don' yo' s'pose I know wha' dat am? Dat am on'y a toy snake. Dat amn't nuffin'!"

"Yez war frightened be it, all the same, me bucko."

"G'way wif yous! What I seed war a rale snake, ten foot long, wid eyes on um as big as dinnah plates. Fink I'd be scared wif a little ting like dat?"

"That's too thin."

"No good, Clemmy," laughed Yum. "No hab gleen in eye, no gettee fool, no b'lebe Clemmy."

The laugh was on Clem, and he knew it, and so he said doggedly:

"Dem boys do dis, I'se shuah, else they wouldn' be 'roun'. Ef dey was bigger, I'd break deir jaw fo' two bits."

The boys went away laughing, and presently met Mr. Nettlebone, who said:

"Boys, I want you to go to the station and meet a friend of mine, a noted grape cultivator by the name of Schagenfeldt."

"All right, uncle."

Then they both skipped off, while Jimmy said to Timmy:

"A Dutchman. Here's more fun!"

And Timmy winked his left eye at Jimmy and made reply:

"Bet your life, and plenty of it."

## CHAPTER XXI.

THOSE quiet twins met Mr. Schagenfeldt at the station, as requested by their good old uncle, Peter Nettlebone.

They knew him the moment they set eyes on him, for he was Dutch from the crown of his broad-brimmed hat to the soles of his cloth-topped shoes.

"Here's another fun-factory, Jim," whispered Timmy.

"In full running order," answered his brother with a grin.

Mr. Schagenfeldt stood on the platform of the little railway station surrounded by a formidable array of boxes, bundles and trunks.

There was one big trunk as large as an omnibus, and others running down from that size to one no larger than a good-sized glove box.

There were bundles, valises, shawl straps and brown paper parcels, besides a package containing sticks, umbrellas, fishing-rods and fowling pieces.

"The old fellow carries as much luggage as a circus," laughed Timmy.

"Or an Englishman making a three weeks' tour of the country to write a book on America," added Jimmy.

Meanwhile one after another of the passengers who had arrived by the train had departed to their several destinations, leaving the Dutchman and his belongings standing alone in the middle of the platform.

Seeing no sign of any one he knew, he proceeded to sit down on his big trunk and to placidly fill and light a big china pipe, which must have held four ounces of tobacco at the least calculation.

"Get on to the steam-engine," said one of the twins, as the smoke began to puff out in huge clouds.

"Lost in the Fog; or, the Missing Dutchman," chuckled Timmy. "He'll be out of sight in a moment unless the wind rises."

A puff of air presently carried the smoke away, and then Mr. Schagenfeldt was seen to consult an enormous open-faced gold watch, bigger even than Clem's famous repeater.

"We'll want a truck to carry that up to the house," said Timmy.

"And a derrick to lift it aboard," interposed Jimmy.

Dropping the huge chronometer into his capacious

pocket, the big Dutchman puffed away in silence for a few minutes, and then laid the pipe on the trunk beside him.

Then, taking a big handkerchief as large as a sheet from the tail-pocket of his full-skirted coat, he put it over his head, folded his arms across his chest, and proceeded deliberately to go to sleep.

"Well, if I ever!"

"That does beat the Dutch, indeed."

The twins waited a little while, and then Timmy said:

"Let's wake him up."

"All right, my boy."

Timmy thereupon jumped out of the wagon, walked across the platform and shouted:

"Is there anybody here by the name of Schagenfeldt?"

At the sound of his name the big Dutchman suddenly started up as if kicked by an elephant.

"Dot was me," he cried, pulling the handkerchief from his head.

"Oh! is it?" asked Timmy. "Well, do you want to go to Mr. Nettlebone's?"

"Yaw, mein leedle friendt, Meesder Nettlebone tolt me he sendt a man to pring me und my few leedle drabs oop to der house."

"Well, I'm the man."

"Vat! you was der man?" laughed the other heartily.

"Off you was a man, I dinks you was bicked before you was ripe already. Yaw, I dinks so, by Himmel!"

"Yes, and I'm the other man," put in Jimmy, who now came up.

The big Dutchman looked at both boys and then burst out with a laugh that shook his fat sides and made the rafters ring.

"Why, py der creat Julius Snoozer, you was bote off you no pigger as a poy, bote togedder, und you say you was two mans," he ejaculated.

"Well, we've come to take you up to the house, anyhow."

"Den, my big mans, yust gif me a lifft indo dot wagon off yours, und pud in dose few leedle drunks und baggages."

Timmy snickered at the idea of him and Jimmy lifting that big trunk into the light wagon they had brought down with them.

It was bigger than the wagon itself, and the two boys could have been put into it and lost.

"You must be going to stay a long time," said Timmy, "by the quantity of baggage you have."

"Didn't you lose a trunk or two?" remarked the other brother.

"Nein, dey was all here, all right," answered the Dutchman, in the most matter-of-fact manner. "I was yust came oop to see mein friendt Nettlebone for a leedle while. I dinks I was go pack to der ceedy do-morrer."

"Then the army wagon can stay here," said Jimmy, pointing to the gigantic trunk.

"Vat! mein drupk must sday here all de vile!" cried the Dutchman.

"Ach himmel, mein dooth-prush and mein night sheirt and mein shlibbers and mein ceegaredes, mein gosmetics, mein shnuff, mein baber off dobacco, mein dowels, und mein gologne wader was ell in dot drupk. How you dinks I was ged along midoudt dem, mein leedle friendts?"

"What about the other ones?" asked the boys.

"Can't you leave them?"

"Leaf dem behindt!" gasped Mr. Schagenfeldt.

"Leaf behindt mein nabgin-rings und doothbicks, und shaving soap, und razors, und doiledt ardiggles, und merch-pox, und gandles, und gough lossenges! Mein gracious, I don't could leafe anydings behindt."

"And you've only come for a day or so?"

"Yaw, dat was all, bud I nefer dravels midout efery convenience. I was losdt meinselt off I didt."

"He'll want as much waiting on as a kid," whispered Timmy.

"And will have all the servants wild," retorted the other half of that pair of quiet twins.

However, the boys made arrangements to have the stuff taken up to the house, and then proceeded to drive off with their big load.

Mr. Schagenfeldt would not stir a peg, however, until he had seen all his traps put upon a wagon and had counted them all over twice to see that none were missing.

Then he climbed up into the rear seat, pressing the springs flat, while the boys occupied the one in front and drove.

The baggage-wagon followed on behind, and in this manner the procession entered the grounds of the Nettlebone estate.

Clem was at work on the lawn when the cavalcade arrived, and he opened his eyes in wonder.

"Bless my stahs!" he cried. "Reckon de ol' man mus' be taken in bo'dahs. Dis col'd ge'man hab to get up at fo' o'clock in de mo'nin' to shine up de shoes. Guess I'll hab to strike fo' mo' wages."

Then, when he saw only one big fat Dutchman in the wagon with the two boys, his surprise increased.

"What! all dem baggage fo' jes' one man! 'Spec's he mus' be de great Mogul, or suffin' ob dat so't. Don' car', anyhow; I'se as big as him, an' if he goes fo' to o'dah me roun' too much, I jes' fall on him an' knock him wind out."

Then the big moke laughed aloud at the idea, and the horses, alarmed at the sound, started to run, nearly throwing the Dutchman into the bottom of the wagon.

"Whoa!" cried the boys, tugging at the reins.

Pat Malone and Mr. Joy ran out and held the horses, and just then old Peter himself appeared on the veranda to welcome his friend.

"Schagenfeldt, old boy, how are you?" he cried, coming forward. "Glad to see you, blessed if I ain't. Got your room all ready, and will wait dinner for you while you dress."

"I was glad to see meinselt, friendt Nettlebone," responded the Dutchman, getting out with the assistance of half a dozen farm-hands.

Then he grabbed hold of Uncle Peter's hand and shook it till the old fellow fairly winced.

"My nephews, Master Timmy Bing and Master Jimmy Bing," said the uncle, as the boys alighted. "Boys, shake hands with Mr. Schagenfeldt, my old friend."

"Glad to know you, sir," said Timmy, touching his hat and then putting his hands behind him.

"I've only got one pair of hands, thank you," laughed Jimmy, as he also bowed.

"So dem was your nephews, don'd it?" asked the Dutchman.

"Yes, and I call 'em my two bowers."

"I dinks dey was two leedle shokers already, in-sdeadt," laughed Schagenfeldt.

Old Peter laughed too, and then he and his friend went into the house.

"Tol' me once, boys, am dat big Dutchman gwine to stay yer?" asked Clem, when host and guest had disappeared.

"Yes, Clemmy, and you've got to wait on him."

"Fo' de land sakes, honey, don' yo' s'pecs dat I'se got wo'k 'nuff a ready wifout waitin' on dat big Dutchman?"

"Oh, you can't get out of it in that way," grinned Timmy. "That Dutchman has been used to living in style, and you'll have to shave, dress, and wait on him at table."

"Guess I hab waited on de bes' ge'men in de lan'," snorted Clem, "an' I reckon I isn't gwine to wait on any ol' fat Dutchman, not if I knows m'se'f."

"Clemmy put on luggee, allee same genteeman, but him on'y common niggee man. Scubbee dishee, feedee pig, allee same washee house bloy," remarked Yum Bung, who was around, of course, when there was any discussion going on.

Clem had to bear a hand in carrying the Dutchman's big trunks up-stairs, and then had to black his various pairs of shoes, all of which increased his animosity against the new-comer.

"Don' I jes' wish dat dem twins get on to dat Dutchman," he muttered, "an' wo'k off some libely snaps on um. Well, I tol' yo'!"

After fixing himself up, Mr. Schagenfeldt went out to take a stroll, unknown to old Peter, who thought him up in his room.

The boys saw him go out, but said nothing, seeing a chance for a joke in prospect.

After a while dinner was announced, and the bell was rung in the hall to let the guest know it.

There was no response, however, and after waiting some time Uncle Peter became impatient.

"I wonder if that Dutchman could have fallen asleep?" he muttered.

"He looked sleepy," declared Timmy.

"Just go knock on his door, will you?—there's a good boy."

"Yes, sir."

"And give the bell another shake, Yum."

"Yeppee, me lingee bell like slunder."

Then old Peter went away, and Jimmy, looking out of a window on the hall, said, with a laugh:

"There's his nibbs outside now, taking his time."

Timmy looked out, saw Schagenfeldt coming slowly up the walk, and said:

"Yum, you old heathen, take hold and ring the big bell. Nothing else will start him."

"Allee yite, Masseer Timmy," answered the heathen.

Now, over the main entrance was a belfry in which hung a big bell only used on occasions when Mr. Nettlebone wished to summon his entire force of employees to the house.

The bell-rope led down into the vestibule, and was fastened around a cleat at one side, out of the way.

Yum Bung now proceeded to unhitch the rope preparatory to giving the bell a regular old-time shaking up.

"Dutchee man thinkee world bloke loose," he muttered, with a grin.

The two boys went outside to see the fun, and Yum Bung began operations forthwith.

He gave that bell an awful yank, and it began to ring like mad.

As it swung back and forth it carried Yum up with the rope, while he held on like grim death.

The weight made the bell turn over, and Yum danced in mid-air like a good fellow every time it turned, his pig-tail snapping like a whip with the sudden motion.

Along the hall came Nora, the Irish table girl, with a platter of hot mutton chops for the Dutchman's dinner.

Yum Bung's flying queue took her in the eye, and she dropped the dish, chops and all, and yelled blue blazes in a twinkling.

Just then the Dutchman, alarmed at the din, and thinking there was a fire in the house and that he must save his valuables, came bounding into the vestibule.

The first thing he perceived was an Irish girl, apparently throwing a platter of hot chops straight at his head.

The next thing he became aware of was a Chinaman's foot, with its double-decked shoe, taking him in the pit of the stomach.

He kicked and splurged and threw out his hands while his big watch jumped from his pocket, the chain getting entangled in Yum's pedal extremities.

Over and over went that big bell, and up and down jumped Yum, squealing like a pig and having no end of fun.

"Be heavens, I'm kilt, so I am!" yelled Nora.

"Och, himmel, mein vind was knogged oudt mit me," howled Schagenfeldt.

"No can lettee go bell; get callied up to ee loof," chattered Yum Bung.



"Fo' de land sakes, jes' look at dat Dutchman! He'm gone crazy," laughed Clem, holding his sides.

"Catch onto the picnic on wheels!" roared Timmy. "The Dutchman beats the laughing moke all to bits," remarked Jimmy.

The sound of the bell had aroused the help, and now all hands came running toward the house.

Old Peter could not tell what it all meant, and he at once hurried to the vestibule to find out.

There sat his Dutch friend on one side and Nora on the other, looking as jolly as mutes at a funeral.

Between them vibrated Yum, his feet flying about like pendulums gone mad.

Outside were all hands gazing in at the open doorway at the comical sight.

"Stop that noise—stop ringing that bell, you moon-eyed idiot!" roared the old man.

"No can stoppee; bell ling hisself!" cried Yum.

Mr. Joy, Mr. Bailey, Pat Malone and a couple of Frenchmen now ran in, seized Yum and stopped the ringing.

"What do you mean by ringing that bell?" demanded Nettlebone of the rescued Chinaman.

"Ole man tellee Yum lingee bell fo' Dutcheeman comee dinnee. Yum ling bell, bell cathee Yum, cally him lup to loof."

"I never told you to ring the big bell, you pig-headed heathen."

"Odee bellee no goodee wakee up Dutcheeman, lillie bloys tellee Yum ling biggee lun."

"Oh, they did, eh?" laughed the old man, realizing that the twins had been up to mischief again.

"Yeppee, hopee die lif ain't so."

"That's all right, but don't do it again without orders from me."

"Nopee, me nebbie do," and Yum waddled off grinning.

"Vat mage all dot noise aboutt, mein friendt Nedlebone?" asked the puzzled Dutchman, getting on his feet.

"Oh, nothing, only the dinner bell."

"Mein gracious, you dinks I was deaf already! Py der hogeys, I was heardt dot pell more as fife miles."

The debris was quickly cleared away, the bell-rope secured, the help dismissed, and the door closed, and then Mr. Nettlebone escorted his friend into dinner.

Mrs. Roriarity presided upon this occasion, the host and his guest sitting at either end of the table, and the boys together at one side, while Yum, Peggy and Nora waited and passed the many palatable dishes made ready for the feast.

The Dutchman's appetite was as big as himself, but knew no discrimination, for he put down mutton chops, fried oysters, milk, lobster salad, pickled onions, cream tarts, roast beef, canned salmon and numerous other incongruous dishes without regard to sequence or the probable result to his stomach.

All he seemed to care about was to fill up, and there seemed to be no limit to his capacity.

"Dot was a fery nice lungch, mein friendt," he observed at length. "When was you hadt tinner?"

"Oh, in about three hours, I guess," laughed Uncle Peter.

"Den I hadt me a shmoke so I don'd got me hungkry once," retorted Schagenfeldt, arising and lighting a big cigar which he took from a side pocket.

The boys adjourned, giving each other the wink, and while the table was being cleared Mr. Nettlebone and Mr. Schagenfeldt indulged in cigars and wine.

"Uncle Peter will have him out here showing him the vineyards pretty soon," observed Timmy.

"And that's when we want to get in our fine work," continued Jimmy.

Presently down a shady walk, under a tree, the twins came upon a garden bench which quickly took their eyes.

Said bench had originally had three supports, one at each end and one in the middle, but now the one at the south end was broken and refused to contribute to the support of said bench.

If a person sat on the good end it was all right, but woe be unto them if they trusted themselves to the poor end.

"Let's take a seat," said Timmy, and both boys sat down on the good end of the bench.

Presently they beheld, coming down the walk, Mr. Schagenfeldt and their uncle.

"Keep dark," said Timmy.

"As my hat," replied Jimmy.

The Dutchman was puffing with the walk, short as it had been, and as he came up he espied the bench.

"De varm wedder mages me tiredt already, und I sids me down," he remarked, taking the shaky end of the bench.

The boys' weight kept the other end steady, and as Schagenfeldt kept his feet on the ground and did not try any funny business of stretching them out on the bench, he was all right for a time.

"Won't you have this seat?"

So asked the boys as Uncle Peter came up.

Then they sprang up with alacrity to let their dear old uncle sit down.

The result was rather surprising both to Uncle Peter and to the Dutchman.

The bench, no longer supported at the further end, flew up like a spring-board.

Up went one end and down went the other, and the other, of course, took the Dutchman with it.

He struck the ground like a load of stones, rolled off the bench, and then sat up with astonishment written all over his expressive countenance.

"Donner und blitz! what was dose, I lige to know?" he asked, very much puzzled.

The bench, meanwhile, had assumed its customary attitude, and even those quiet twins could not have looked more innocent.

"Was dor a drick pench, mein goot friendt?" he asked. "I sids me town mit him und he is all rightt, und den, all by a sudden, he trows me over mit der

groundt und den shtand ub again yust so nice like you please."

"Oh, I forgot about that bench," said Mr. Nettlebone, with a grin. "I must have it fixed."

"Yaw, I dinks so," mused Schagenfeldt, as he arose. "Dose nephews off yours was fery bolite, vasn't dey, mein friendt? Dey ged ub to gib de oldt men a seadt, und den I lose me mein own seadt already. Dot vas fery bolite, dough, fery much."

Old Peter could not help laughing, for he knew that the Dutchman had guessed correctly.

The young rascals were now walking away, arm in arm, like two very well-behaved young gentlemen, and looking so innocent that no one could think of saying a word to them.

Old Peter showed his guest over the place, and then, on the return, led the way to a pretty little arbor where there was a rustic table and seats, and where Clem had been ordered to serve them a bottle of champagne.

Meantime the twins had seen Clem and had learned all about the order.

"You know how to draw a champagne cork, I suppose, Clem?" they asked.

"Deed I does, chillen. Spec's I is as ign'ant as some folks?"

"You wouldn't let it fly and hit anybody, I suppose?"

"Deed I wouldn't, chillen, not fo' de whole worl'."

"All right, see that you don't."

They say that a nod is as good as a wink to a knowing horse, and Clem was cute enough to take a hint.

"Dose was nodd drick penches, ain't id?" asked Schagenfeldt, as he sat down cautiously.

"Oh, no," laughed Peter; "they are all right, and here comes Clem with some very choice champagne, some of my own make."

"I would like to daste me dot," said the visitor, smacking his lips in anticipation of something nice.

Clem had rigged himself up in white trousers, jacket and apron, and looked very toney as he came in with a cooler in his hand, and proceeded to lay out glasses and take a bottle from the ice.

He went to work very dexterously, removing the capsule and the wires from the cork, and Peter congratulated himself upon the neat manner in which Clem was behaving.

Suddenly, however—it must have been an accident—the cork flew out with a bang and took Schagenfeldt right on the nose.

"Ach, himmel, I was shodt!" he cried, and falling back on the seat, his feet flew up and took Clem under the chin.

Over went the coon and away went the bottle, while Clem remarked to himself:

"Ef I ain't habin' de same ol' luck I allus does! Neber min' wha' dem boys says to me ag'in."

## CHAPTER XXII.

THE success of Clem's little joke on the big Dutchman was not as tremendous as the laughing moke had anticipated.

True, he had plumped the Dutchman's bugle with the champagne cork in fine style, but Schagenfeldt in return had caromed on his chin with those big feet of his, and that was not so pleasant, by any means.

Over went Clem, bottle and all, the wine spouting forth and showering in a fine spray over Uncle Peter and the Dutchman.

One of those quiet twins happened, opportunely, to be around, quite by accident, of course.

He ran in, grabbed the bottle from Clem and filled the glasses before all the wine had escaped.

"Go back to your work, Clem," commanded Mr. Nettlebone. "You are neither useful nor ornamental here."

"Mein gracious! I think mein nose was as big as der boddle already," muttered Mr. Schagenfeldt, taking hold of his sniffer.

"Wine is good for a red nose," said the twin—Schagenfeldt could not tell them apart, so it don't matter which one it was; "hadn't you better take some?"

"Wine was goodt fur a red nose? Yaw, I think so," laughed the Dutchman, "und so I tagkes some off dot."

Poor Clem left the summer-house, his reputation as a butler being under a cloud.

"Neber did anyfing dose boys wanted me to yit but I got inter some kin' of trubble," he muttered.

"Tain't dat I isn't 'preciated, but dem boys 'witch anybody, an' dat's de trufe."

Then he went off to find some work, although not in any very great hurry to find it.

And, of course, Pat Malone got onto him the first thing, and told the rest.

"Yez makes a joine waitther, yez does," he sneered.

"Faix, I wouldn't have yez to be chambermaid to a pig, so I wouldn't."

Somehow Yum Bung had heard of the racket, and he too must say something.

"Clemmy graceful, allee same bull flog," he chattered. "Spillee dlink on 'ee glound. Hittee Dutchyman in nose, gettee knocked lout, gettee big boot in him chin. Hi-ya! belly good fun."

"G'long wi' you'se all," snorted the irate darky.

"You'se do no bettah ef dem dratted twins am 'roun'."

Those dratted twins were still around, and proposing to make it lively for the Dutchman.

"As long as he stays we can give Clem a let up," suggested Jimmy.

"Yes, but we want to be more fly, for he's cuter than Clem."

"You don't see any skeeters on me, do you, sonny?" asked Jim.

"No more than you see on me, and that's nix."

Then you don't need to tell me to be fly."

"Nixey, Jim, but it's as well to keep it posted up for general reference."

Uncle Peter and Schagenfeldt had finished their wine and were now sitting in the summer-house having a quiet chat.

"I think I will dake me a leedle nap once," presently remarked the Dutchman, with that breezy disregard of etiquette common enough in some learned people, but which ordinary folks consider rude.

Without further ado he stretched himself out on a bench, threw a big red silk handkerchief over his face, and was soon snoring like a young bull.

Mr. Nettlebone merely smiled and left the place, knowing of old that he would have to humor his strange guest.

After he had gone to the house the boys put in an appearance.

"Catch on to his slumbering nibbs," chuckled Timmy.

"Looks sweet enough to kick," added Jimmy.

"Let's have some fun."

Then those two quiet little innocents ran off and got a big fish-horn as long as either of them.

"Have you got wind enough to blow it, Jim?"

"Yes, if you'll hold it up."

Then Timmy put the big end of the horn within six inches of the Dutchman's ear and stationed Jimmy at the little end.

"Start her up!"

"Toot-toot! too-too-toot!"

Low at first, and then gathering volume, spoke that horn.

TOOT!

Then it gave a regular snort, which equaled any of Gabriel's performances on the cornet, and even went beyond.

That was too much for Schagenfeldt, and he awoke with a jump and sat bolt upright.

By the time he had his eyes open the boys had skipped.

"Off I don't shtop snoring so loudt, I nefer geds me a goodt nap already," he remarked, wisely.

That tickled the boys immensely, for they were where they could hear without being seen.

"He wouldn't tumble if he fell off the roof."

"Just think of a fellow snoring as loud as that!"

Satisfied that his position had had something to do with it, the Dutchman now sat up straight, in an angle of the seat, with his legs extended.

The big red coverlid went over his face again, and in a few moments the nasal concert started up once more.

"Shall we give him another horn?" asked Timmy.

"Yes, but you do it this time; it takes too much breathe to try it often."

Then Timmy got at the mouth-piece, and Jimmy held the other end plumb against Schagenfeldt's ear.

Such a blast as followed knocked the underpinnings clear from out the former one.

The Dutchman jumped up about four feet, and the boys had a narrow escape from being caught.

"Mein himmel, I was caughtt gold already in mein headt, und I shneeze lige eferydings. Dere was no use to go shleep off I wages me oob efery dwo segonds."

"Catch on to the sneeze," laughed Timmy.

"If he sneezed like that once, he'd shake his head off."

"Oh, he'll be a dandy picnic for us. He's too thick-headed to tumble to anything."

"We'll have to put up the penny whistle," chuckled Timmy, shouldering the monster cornet, "for his highness thinks he don't want to take any more naps."

Off went the boys while Schagenfeldt sat enjoying the prospect through the lattice-work of the summer-house.

"Off Mr. Nedlebone don't hafe so many drees und flowers aroundt his blace already it was been fery pretty," he wisely remarked.

Returning to the house the boys found Clem sitting at the rear door, in the shade, with his back toward them.

He was interviewing the half of a big watermelon which Mrs. Roriarity had given him because no one else wanted it.

"Tol' yo' what, chillen," Clem was saying to himself, "dey's nuffin' so good as watahmelyum, 'less it's fried chicken or a good fat coon. Yum, yum!"

Then he buried his big mouth in the crisp and juicy meat, and gave himself up to the full enjoyment of his unaccustomed feast.

Suddenly, and without any warning, Timmy gave him a blast from that overgrown trumpet, smack in his ear.

Clem did not stop to ask what the trouble was, but just fell off his seat, watermelon and all, and let out a yell.

When he picked himself out of the dirt he saw the twins in front of him, Timmy leaning on the big horn and smiling.

"Did yo' heah dat, chillen?" asked Clem. "Specs de end ob de worl' hab come fo' shu'."

"Why, that was nothing," laughed Jimmy. "That was only a whisper."

"On'y a whispah!" repeated Clem. "Well, ef dat am on'y a whispah, honey, I don' wantter heah him hollah."

"How's this?" and Timmy let out another snort from the horn that made Clem jump.

"H'm! Might ha' knowed it war dem boys all de time!" muttered the disgusted coon, as the boys went in. "If yo' heah ob any mischief goin' on wifin fo'ty miles ob dis plantation, youse kin be shuah dat dey has a han' in it."

"What's the next snap for old Schagenfeldt?" asked Tim.

"Give me time to think."

"H'm! Dat a nice name fo' a man," observed



Clem. "Oh Shake-him-fut. Golly, he done shake him feet undah my chin an' knock me clean obah. Don' want him to shake him feet roun' me again, I tole yo'."

The boys could not think of putting away the fog-horn until they had given Yum a taste of it, and presently they came upon him dressing chickens in the back kitchen.

"Let's give him a duet on it," whispered Jimmy.

Then both boys got hold, put their mouths together and yelled through the horn at the top of their voices. "Cussee, dinnee no leady let," cried Yum, jumping up so quick that his pig tail unwound and stood out straight.

He caught sight of the boys and the horn, and took a drop at once.

"Lillee bloy makee joke all time," he snickered. "Lillee bloy too muchee loud, more bettah send him home."

"When we go, then you lose your job, Yummy, old man."

"Den lillee bloy stay allee time, floo, flee hundred lear," laughed the Chinaman, well knowing on which side of his farinaceous food the oleomargarine was deposited.

Yum went on with his work, and the twins demonstrated to Mrs. Roriaty that they could eat just as many apple turnovers as she was willing to give them, the supply running out, in fact, before their appetites failed.

"Begorrah, yez'll kape me bakin' thim turnovers from marnin' till night," she laughingly complained, "and thim there won't be enough for yez."

"Oh, we've grown since we came here and have to eat more," they cried.

"Troth yez have, and the country air is better for yez than the hot city. Grow on, me jools, an' if yez air as fat as the big Dutchman that came the day, it'll be no more than yez deserve."

"That reminds me," remarked Timmy, washing down the remnant of his last turnover with a cup of milk.

"Me, too," chimed in Jimmy.

Then away they ran, while the jolly housekeeper looked after them, and observed, with a shake of her head:

"They'll be after gettin' up some kedidoes an the Dutchman, and begorry, he's just the kind they loike. Well, let them have their shport, the darlin's, an' sure the naygur will have a risht fur wan phwile."

The twins found Schagenfeldt in the summer-house smoking a big china pipe with a bowl six inches long, the place being fairly blue already, though he had not taken more than a dozen puffs.

"You was nice poys. I think," muttered the Dutchman, "only I don't was toldt you togeder, you look so much alige. You was dwins?"

"Oh, no, we're no relation," said Timmy. "Do you think we look alike?"

"You was loogk so moche aligke dot I don't could toldt which one was spogen last."

"Which one of us?" said Jimmy, with a grin.

"You must see double."

"Touble! Nein; I was see you all righdt, und dere was dwo off you."

"Nixey, Jim, there's only one of me."

"You was fouldt me already off you was saidt dot. I see dwo poys."

"And there's only one," protested the young scamp. "That wine of Uncle Peter's must have gone to your head."

"Off it was gone mit mein feedt I was seen straightd," cried the perplexed Dutchman. "I was could tringk ten poddles off wine und dot don't was mage me see grooked."

"What am I doing now, then?" asked Jimmy, giving his brother a wink.

"You was shstanding shstill, yust loogkin' at me."

"I am, eh?" put in Timmy, waving his arms.

"You don't see right."

"One off you was shstood schtill und de oder was shake his arms."

"Oh, come off! There's only one of me. What am I doing now?"

"And Jimmy waved his arms.

"You vas shoogk your arms."

"No, sir," cried Timmy, keeping still. "I am doing nothing."

"Mein Gott in Himmel," cried the puzzled Dutchman, "dis one vas gwiet und dot one vas shstill, und now dis one vas shstill und dot one vas gwiet."

"You're away off," laughed Jimmy. "When I wave my arms you say I am still, and when I am still you say I wave my arms."

"Vell, one off you vas gwiet und de oder vas shstill already. Dis half vas shstill now once."

"This half?" chuckled Timmy. "How can I be half still and half moving?"

"Dot's what buzzles me already."

"I know."

"What vas dose?"

"You see double and you see crooked at the same time. You mustn't take any more of uncle's wine; it's bad for your head."

"Donner und blitz! mein headt was so dick ligke a shdone und you gouldn't hurt it."

"He is pretty thick-headed, for a fact," whispered Jimmy.

Then while the Dutchman was still cudgeling his brain to account for the seeming trouble, Timmy quietly slipped away.

"Do you see me now?" asked Jimmy.

"Yaw, I see you."

"What am I doing?"

"You was holdt up your lefth handt."

"Right, and now?"

"Shage your righdt foott."

"All hunky. And now?"

"Shage your headt once or dwice."

"Then you're getting better. You only see one of me?"

"Dot was all."

"Oh, you're improving, but you want to look out for the second attack is always worse than the first."

"I don't see droo dot," muttered poor Schagenfeldt. "I nefer was sigck in mein life, und I gould tringk me feefy mugs of peer und see straight efery dime before dis."

"Oh, but this is wine, and that's different."

"Pottstauzend, donnerwetter! I don't was efer gid trungk mit wine off I dakes dwo dozen poddles!" roared the exasperated Schagenfeldt.

Just then Uncle Peter came along, and seeing the Dutchman talking with Jimmy, said:

"So you have had your nap?"

"Yaw, but forst I shnore, und den I shneeze so loudt dot I wages meinsellufub once."

"What do you think of my nephew?"

"I think he was a goodt poy already."

"Have you seen the other one—his brother?"

"Yaw, I think so, but maybe I was misdaken."

"Yes, they look very much alike, but I can tell them apart."

"What you say?"

"I say I can tell them apart. There are two of them, you know, and they look almost alike. This is Jimmy."

"I was knowed I didn't see grooked already," cried Schagenfeldt, "und I toldt mein leedle friendt der same."

"Told him what?"

"Dat dere was dwo, und he make me pelieve dere was only one, und dot I was saw touble."

Old Peter saw that the boys had been playing some joke on his eccentric friend and he laughed heartily, although as yet he did not know what the joke was.

Then he and Schagenfeldt walked together up to the house, and here they found both boys, Jimmy having run on in front.

"I toldt you dere was dwo poys," cried the Dutchman, convincingly, "only I don't know now who dot was what blay dot shoke mir rae."

Then the boys explained the whole affair, and Uncle Peter laughed louder than ever, and said:

"Why, you ought to know that there were two boys, for they brought you up from the station this morning."

"Yaw, dot was so, I hadt forgedt me dot," answered the Dutchman.

Then they all laughed more than ever, and the best of it was that the Dutchman didn't once think of getting mad, but enjoyed the joke as much as any one.

But Uncle Peter wished to show him about the place, and he had come out for that very purpose.

"Wouldn't you like to go around the place?" asked the old gentleman.

"Yaw, I liges dot ferry moche," answered Schagenfeldt, "bud mein legs dey was gif outd puddy gwigg already, I think."

"Oh, you can ride if you like."

"Dot was an imbrosfemendt maybe, und you was hadt a creat many off imbrosfements on der blace."

"You can have the mule; he is quiet and steady, and you can go as slow as you like."

"Off dot mool don't kigg already I dakes him."

"Kick?" laughed Timmy. "Nothing was ever known to kick on Uncle Peter's place; they're too well pleased to kick."

"Of course he don't kick," added Uncle Peter. "He has the rheumatism and can't kick."

"Den I think I dakes me der mool off somepody pring him aroundt."

"Boys, will you go and tell Clem to harness the old mule for Mr. Schagenfeldt to ride?" asked the old gentleman.

Of course they would, for they scented fun in this adventure, and were quite ready to take a good big slice of it on their plates.

So away they went to find the laughing moke, and deliver Mr. Nettlebone's message.

"Dat ol' Dutchman, he make a heap ob trouble, 'pears to dis chille," growled Clem, walking toward the stable.

"Well, your pay goes on just the same, old man."

"Spec' it do, but I cal'late to loaf 'bout ez much ez I w'k, case dat's a eben division ob labah, but 'pears to me dis am one ob de days when de wo'k gets de uppah han'."

"Pshaw! you do less work than any man on the farm."

"Specs I do, chillen," retorted Clem, not caring to deny the soft impeachment, "but den I was bo'n on a Sunday, an' dat amn't a wo'kin' day, an' I se kin' o' uster habin' 's many Sundays ez I kin git."

The old mule was a slow-going, easy-to-get-along-with animal under general circumstances, and was never known to go faster than a walk.

He was sleek and fat, and just the sort of creature for a fat Dutchman to ride, as his back was broad, and he wouldn't shy or kick for all the world.

That is, he would not if he was not fooled with, but then he was as vicious as the mules you read about.

He was old and half blind and not good for much as a worker, but old Peter had owned him a long time, and was too kind-hearted to turn him out to die in his old age.

Having saddled and bridled the mule, Clem led him out to where the boys were waiting, and said:

"Dere yo' am, honcys, but wha' dat lazy ol' Dutchman wan' him fo' gits me. Kean't he walk like oder folks?"

"The old fellow is nearly as pretty as you, isn't he, Clem?" giggled Jimmy, "only your ears are bigger."

"My yeas biggah dan dat mule's? G'long wif you se, chille, you am done gone crazy, you hab."

Then the twins led the long-eared steed around to

the horse-block in front of the house, where Schagenfeldt was waiting.

He had provided himself with a big white umbrella as large as a tent, a book to entertain him during his ride, and a pipe to furnish consolation during the same time.

"Was dot der mool?" he asked, surveying the animal through a huge pair of silver-rimmed spectacles which he now set astride his nose.

"That's the animal."

"He loogk so gentle as a lamb, und dot's what I ligke already."

Then Clem and Pat and Mr. Bailey were called to assist the Dutchman to mount, as he was too fat and too short in the legs to accomplish this feat unaided.

At last he was in the saddle, the reins looped around one arm, and, after a few preliminaries, would be ready to set off.

First he must have his big umbrella, which one of the boys opened and handed to him.

Then his pipe must be lighted and his book opened at the proper place; but after that he was ready.

Off started the mule on a gentle walk, Schagenfeldt seated on his back and presenting a fine picture of quiet contentment, worthy the pencil of an artist.

One hand held the umbrella, the other his book. The big pipe hung from his mouth, and the smoke-wreaths curled slowly upward.

Jimmy led the way, for Schagenfeldt would ride over the fields and through woods part of the journey, and some one would be needed to open gates and let down bars.

The ride was slow and easy and uneventful for some time, and Schagenfeldt thoroughly enjoyed it.

After awhile, however, as he was riding along a strip of woods, Timmy thought he would give Mr. Dutchman a little variety in the programme.

There were several fine large chestnut trees in the path, and the burrs were as plentiful as loafers on election day.

Our young friend picked up one of these, a regular old soaker for size, and while Jimmy went on he dropped behind.

The old mule was proceeding at an easy gait, the Dutchman being half asleep over his pipe and book.

That mischievous twin ran lightly up behind, lifted the mule's tail, and clapped the chestnut burr under it in a twinkling.

Then he gave the tail a downward yank and tittered: "Now, boy, look out for sport!"

#### CHAPTER XXIII.

THE moment that quiet, easy-going mule felt the pricking of the chestnut burr under his caudal appendage he became an entirely different animal.

Before he was a regular Rosinante, but now he became a perfect Bucephalus, though the Dutchman did not in turn change from Don Quixote to Alexander, the respective masters of the famous steeds mentioned.

The first thing that mule did was to let fly both hind heels with a vigor that put to rest all doubts as to his being afflicted with rheumatism or weak joints.

If that quiet twin had ever got a dose of mule's foot, this story, as far as he was concerned, might just as well stop, for in three seconds thereafter he would have crossed on the golden ferry-boat to the shore of the sweet futurity.

However, he was too sudden to be kicked by a mule, and those flying heels smote only the empty air.

The next thing Mr. Mule did was to snort and then to bray for all he was valued at.

If you have ever heard a mule sing, you know how it sounds; if you haven't, I can't describe it.

Imagine a cranky piano struck by lightning, a buzz-saw stuck on a snag, a whole menagerie gone mad, or a congregation of cats holding a protracted love-feast, and then combine all these noises and you won't come within forty miles of the sound a mule makes when he lifts up his voice to bray.

Well, he just whooped her up at his level best, and the Dutchman's hat flew off with the concussion.

But in spite of the kicking and the howling that chestnut burr continued to get there all the same and make things lively for Signor Mullo.

Then, as there was nothing else for it, the animal started off on a dead run, paralyzing the records of all the famous trotters from Flora Temple down to Mand S.

The Dutchman's quiet ride had now become a regular Mazeppa gallop for life.

Away went his book and after it hurried his pipe, to keep the place the poor rider himself grabbing frantically at the reins.

The big, white, open umbrella was turned inside out in a jiffy, and still the Dutchman hung on to it as though it were the most precious thing in the world.

"Donner und blitz, Pottstauzendverfuchter, Donnerwetter sauerkraut!" he managed to ejaculate. "What was der madder mit dot mool?"

The mule wasn't stopping to answer foolish questions, but was doing his best to get away from the fire in the rear.

Such a shaking up as that Dutchman got was never heard of, and John Gilpin's famous ride was a gentle canter when compared to it.

"Go it, you dandy!" laughed the twins, as they looked on at the circus. "You'll get there by tea-time."

Off flew Schagenfeldt's spectacles, and in trying to recover them the big umbrella was left behind.

"Mein Gott in himmel, why don't you shtop a leedle already?" inquired the Dutchman.

On and on flew that mule till he came to a rail fence, which he managed to just clear and no more.

Schagenfeldt got a terrible bumping, but he held on to that mule's neck with desperation.



The mule did not care to be choked, and he let out such a fearful bray that the Dutchman was scared.

He loosened his grip, and the mule bolted toward a clump of trees near by.

Some of the branches hung low, and one of these caught the Dutchman just under the chin.

He was snaked off that mule's back in half a jiffy.

He made a grab for something, he cared not what, and caught the limb that had unseated him.

He grabbed it with both hands, and hung on like grim death.

"Hellup, hellup!" he yelled, with all his might.

"Safe me from dot destruction!"

The limb was a stout one, but so was the Dutchman, and between these two facts came in the fun.

The limb bent just so far, and if that thick-headed Dutchman had released his hold he would have dropped just about six inches.

He imagined, however, that he was suspended a frightful height above the ground, and that to fall would result in his being smashed into forty-seven thousand fragments.

"Safe me, oh, safe me from dot gruel fade," he yelled.

The mule wasn't in the life-saving service that day, and the boys were the only ones to appeal to.

Just at this time those undemonstrative young cherubs came up and took in the show.

"Catch on to the flying trapeze act."

"Thrilling leap for life performed without a net."

The suspended Dutchman made a most comical sight with his feet nearly touching the ground, but the boys took it all in and never giggled.

"Safe me, leedle poys," roared the Dutchman.

"Off you lose me already, safe mein life."

"Why don't you drop?"

"Let go of the limb."

"Did you want me to gill myself?"

"Oh, you're all right."

"Yaw; off I fall feefdy foots I thinks I was all right."

Then the boys walked around and stood in front.

The Dutchman saw them, and dropped, as it were, though he still hung there.

"Oh, mein arms is giling out. Do you think I could drop so far as dot, my leedle friendts?"

"You might try it."

"Give it a show once."

"I think maybe I will."

Then he let go of the limb, but the fall was so slight that he was all broken up.

He had to make more of it by slipping and coming down solid on his rear extension, making a hole in the ground deep enough to hold water.

"Himmel! mein pack was proke already," remarked he, in a tone of honest conviction.

"Do you think you could carry me to der house?"

The idea of those two boys carrying that big Dutchman back to the house did not seem at all absurd.

Not to the Dutchman, at least, but the boys just smiled.

However, upon investigation, he found that he was not hurt as badly as he had supposed, and could walk as well as any one.

"I rites me no more mit dot gwiet mool already," he sagely remarked. "Gife me one dot didn't been so gwiet de negst dime."

Then he started over the back track to look for his various possessions, having had enough of surveying the farm for one while.

The boys took the other direction, and went in search of the mule, not knowing whether or not he had broken his neck in revenge for the Dutchman's escape.

However, they found him quietly grazing in a clover field not far off, somewhat lathered and winded, but none the worse for his wild race.

The burr had fallen from its hiding-place, and as the cause of his anger was now removed, the mule was nearly as good-natured as formerly.

The boys had but little difficulty in catching him, and then they both mounted and rode toward the house.

They arrived just after the Dutchman, Uncle Peter having come out to see why his guest had returned so soon.

"Didn't you enjoy your ride?"

"Oh, yaw, I enchoy de ride when I don't dake dot mool some more already."

"What's the matter with the mule?"

"He kigs once."

"No?"

"Und he mages doo moche moosic mit his mout."

"Well, well!"

"Und he run away like der tuyfel, chumps der fences und runs under der drees und leaves me hanging away ub by der dop."

"Why, I can scarcely believe it."

"Yaw, mein friendt Neddlepone, dot was drue what I toldt you."

"Why, he seems quiet enough now with the boys."

"Vell, I don't knowed der explanation off dot, but I knowed dot I lose me mein bipe und mein pook, und hadt mein umpreller durned ouside in mit him-selluf."

"Well, it's very funny," muttered the old gentleman, "but suppose you come in and look through the library. You'll have time before dinner."

Those quiet twins didn't see fit to offer the old man any explanation concerning the wherefore of Schagenfeldt's wild ride, and he therefore continued to be puzzled over it.

Taking the mule around to the stable, they found Clem loafing around under pretense of working.

"Wha' bring yo' back so soon, honey?" he asked.

"Dutchman got tired of riding."

"Why, dat mule am easy to ride."

A sudden thought entered Timmy's busy brain.

He had another of those prickly chestnut overcoats stuck in his pocket.

He thought he might as well use it now as at any other time.

"Bet you can't ride that mule," he said, quietly.

"Wha' dat, chile?" asked Clem, in surprise.

"Bet you a dollar you won't ride him from here to the road."

"Don't bet yo' money, chile. Yo' lose him fo' sho'."

"That's all right. You can't do it."

"Gimme a dollah ef I do?"

"Yes, sir."

"Watch how easy I earns de dollah," chuckled Clem, with a full-sized grin.

"Hold up; the saddle is on crooked," said Timmy, carelessly.

Lifting it up, he put the burr under it in such a way that it would not be felt until the saddle pressed on it.

"Heah I go," cried Clem, as he jumped aboard.

The minute he did so the mule got the full weight of the sharp pricklers, with two hundred pounds of moke added, right in the small of the back.

The way he pranced and snorted was a caution to timid riders.

He let out one big bray, kicked up all four heels at once, and then fairly stood on his head.

Clem slid down over his neck and tried to hold on, but that mule backed out from under him and left him in a heap on the ground in a brace of shakes.

He snorted around for awhile, but at last Timmy managed to quiet him and removed the cause of all the disturbance.

"Don' un'stan' dat 'tall," muttered Clem, as he picked himself up. "Guess I'se rid dat mule afo'. Wha' he wante 'have so now like ter know, h'm'?"

But the boys would not explain, and everybody that had seen Clem go bouncing over that mule's head had the grand laugh on him.

"Clemmy no sabe lide," sang out Yum Bung. "No keepee on mulee, stand on him head likee dlunken man."

"Faix, there was a pair av mules," added Pat, "an' I think the naygur war the biggest."

"Clem is in training for the circus," laughed Mr. Joy, "and will do first-rate if he don't break his neck first."

"H'm! Some folks am mighty smaht till dey try to do suffin' demselves," sniffed Clem, "an' den dey gits lef'."

The sarcastic moke went one way and the boys another, and, happening to pass the kitchen a few minutes later, they heard the housekeeper sputtering away over something.

"What's the matter, aunty?" they inquired.

"Troth, it's that Dutchman," the good woman explained. "Jist as dinner or supper or lunch, or whatever he calls it, is ready, he wants some saft-bl'ed eggs, and I have to kape iverything waitin' while I sirds for fresh eggs to cook for him."

"We'll get 'em," said Timmy, with a quiet wink to Jimmy.

"Faix, yez air good boys, and that's no lie."

Off went the boys to the hen residence, Timmy saying with a grin:

"Let's work in some Chiner ones on him."

"Right you are."

When Mrs. Rorarity got the eggs she didn't stop to notice that more than half were the bogus article, but plumped them all into hot water to boil the regulation three minutes.

Dinner was speedily announced, and when the soup had been served in came Norah with the eggs, which she placed before Schagenfeldt.

He took up one and tried to crack it on the edge of his plate.

It was no go, and he hit it a harder rap.

He only succeeded in chipping a piece out of his plate.

"I don't was lige hardt poiled eggs," he puffed.

"I luges dem soft already, gooked dree minutes by der glock."

Then he took up another and tried it, but this was like the first and he laid it down in despair.

"Dose eggs was been boileddt two days, I think," he remarked, after trying three or four more.

Then he got mad, and picking up another, cried impatiently:

"Donner und blitz! I dry off I could preak dis one once."

Then he let it fly straight for the opposite side of the room.

At that moment the door opened, and Yum Bung came in carrying a big joint of roast meat on a platter.

If the thing had been timed it could not have happened better.

That sample of hen fruit took the Chinaman square between the eyes, just above his nose.

It wasn't a counterfeit egg, either, but the genuine article.

Consequently it exploded when it struck, and Yum's complexion was more yellow than ever.

"Blamee, cussee, blazee!" yelled the astonished Chinaman, dropping the platter on the floor. "How be? No 'stand'."

"What's the matter?" cried Mr. Nettlebone, looking around.

The boys never once smiled, but went on with their soup like the little innocents they were.

"Somebody shootee, hittee in eye," answered Yum, wiping the egg from his forehead. "Gettee hit bad, allee blains comee lout."

Then Schagenfeldt let out a laugh which shook the room, and cried:

"Oxcuse me, mein friendt, but dot was one to bay for der kigk in der shtomack you was gife me dis morning."

"Dutchman too flesh, gettee punch in eye somee

day," muttered Yum, who supposed that the egg had been thrown purposely.

He placed the joint on the table, cleared up the mess and waddled out, resolving to get square on Schagenfeldt before he left the house.

"Oxcuse me off I gedit med mit dose eggs und chow my demper once, friendt Neddlepone," said the Dutchman, "but I don't was understoodt me apoud dose fresh eggs. I think they was been laid fife year already."

"Let me fix one for you," said Timmy, looking as beaming as an angel, and then he took up a regulation egg, cracked it neatly and dropped it in the Dutchman's soup.

"That's easy enough," he said.

"Of course it is," chimed in Jimmy, and he also performed the egg-dropping trick to perfection.

"Dose poys peadt der tuyfel, I think," remarked Schagenfeldt. "I don't was been able to preak me dem eggs dill I drow dem mit der Shinymans, und here dey preaks dem de forst dime."

"Let me look at them," laughed Uncle Peter, picking up the dish.

Then he took a grand tumble, and laughed till his sides ached.

"No wonder," he cried. "They have given you China eggs by mistake."

"Und I gife der Shina egg to der Shinamans," laughed Schagenfeldt. "Dot was goodt shoke, I think."

"Yum does not, however, I fancy," whispered Timmy, "and we'll see some fun yet before we get through."

In fact, the moor-eyed one was meditating revenge even then, and when the dessert came on he was square with the Dutchman.

There were puddings and pies, and lastly, just before the coffee, a dish of Chinese invention.

A plate was placed in front of each person, which held an egg beautifully ornamented and frosted, and this, upon being broken open, was found to contain some very fine ice-cream.

The secret was how the cream got in the egg, which did not appear to have been broken, and Yum, who had prepared the dish several times, would never give the snap away.

Schagenfeldt, fearing that another egg trick would be played on him, waited till he saw how the others got along before tackling his dish.

"Mein wordt, I nefer knew dot hens gould lay eggs mit ice-cream in dem!" he ejaculated. "Dot was most wonterful."

"These are China eggs, too," laughed Timmy, "and Yum makes them."

"Der Shinaman lay dese eggs?" exclaimed the Dutchman. "I nefer heardt me off dot pefore already."

Then he proceeded to crack his egg as he had seen the others do.

Instead of finding it full of delicious cream, however, out jumped a mouse and made a dash for him.

The astonished man jumped back, fell out of his chair and rolled over on the floor, yelling bloody murder, fire, and everything else.

Yum had squared accounts, for if there was anything that caused that big Dutchman mortal terror it was a mouse.

The little creature escaped in the confusion, and Schagenfeldt was picked up trembling like a leaf.

"I don't couldt sliland mouses," he remarked. "I wouldt face me a lion or a elephant quicker as I wouldt one off dose mouses. Dey mages me grazzy already. Was he gone away? Off he was here I don't could eat some more."

"All you'd have to do would be to fall on him," laughed old Peter, "and he wouldn't trouble you."

"Ach! I would not touch him for de worldt. He was eaden mein ice-cream ub, but no maedder, let him geep away, I don't lige me dose mouses."

"Yum did that to get hunk on the Dutchman for hitting him with the egg," whispered Timmy.

"Oh, you bet that Chinaman is growing civilized, and will hold his own."

"And the best of it is that we didn't know the fo was coming."

After dinner, as there was an hour or two before dark, and Mr. Nettlebone wished to entertain his guest as much as possible, he asked Schagenfeldt if he would not like to see the lake and the river.

"Yaw, I ligs me dot fery moche, mein friendt," was the answer.

The two thereupon walked down to the river, where they found the twins taking a row.

As soon as the boys espied the Dutchman on the bank they pulled for the shore.

"I know he'll swamp the boat," said Timmy, "but I'm going to ask him to take a ride."

"If he should fall in," put in the other twin, "the water in the river would rise a foot."

"Wouldt you lige to have me tage you for a row, mein leedle friendts?" asked the Dutchman, the instant they came near enough.

It was the very thing they had been going to propose themselves.

Would they like it?

Well, you can just set it down as an assured certainty that they would.

"You won't be too tired?" asked Timmy.

"We're a pretty big load, you know," seconded Jimmy.

That set the Dutchman off, and he laughed till it seemed as if his chin and upper lip were going to part company, his mouth opened so wide.

"Haw, haw! dot was so goodt I most shmile a leedle," he said. "De idea off my gedding tiredt mit dem dwo leedle vellers, no bigger as mitchets? Yaw, dot was so vunny I laef meinself sigk."

Then he got into the boat and sat on the 'midship thwart, the boys sitting together in the stern.



He took up the oars and Uncle Peter shoved off, wishing the party good luck and telling the boys to be sure and show Mr. Schagenfeldt all there was to be seen.

The big Dutchman took up the oars and began pulling a strong, steady stroke which carried them along famously.

"He'll give out soon," whispered Jimmy, "and then we'll have to pull him."

"Which won't be so much fun for us."

"No, and we must fix him."

"Leave that to me, my son."

Timmy was steering, the Dutchman doing the heavy work and going where he was sent.

Pretty soon that mischievous twin espied a snag protruding above the water a couple of inches, just in advance of them.

He winked to Jimmy and turned the boat's head in the proper direction.

Schagenfeldt was putting on a spurt and was pulling like a trooper, doing his level best.

"Dot was goodt eggserize," he remarked, with a puff, "und I ligs it, und it striges me dot—"

Just then he did the striking himself, and vigorously at that.

The boat struck the snag, there was a shock, and over went that fat Dutchman in a twinkling.

He tipped to one side, and, before he could catch his balance, the boat had landed him in the water.

The boys righted in a moment, secured the oars, and pulled away for dear life.

"Safe me!" yelled the floundering Dutchman.

"Wait a minute," cried the boys, but for all that they went no nearer, and their poor victim continued to tumble around and yell for help.

#### CHAPTER XXIV.

Poor Schagenfeldt continued to flounder and float, to struggle and swim, puff and pant, roar, rant and rave in the water, expecting the boys to pick him up.

The boys had other sardines to grill, however, and proceeded to pull ashore.

Quite regardless of the Dutchman, too, as though no such person existed.

"Safe me, leedle poys," he ejaculated, "or I was drownedt already."

But those quiet young scamps pulled to land and got out as cool as an ice-wagon.

"Let's give old Shaggy a chance for his life," laughed Timmy.

Then they gave the boat a push and sent it out into the middle of the stream.

Schagenfeldt saw it coming and swam toward it.

He would climb in, take the oars and row back to the bank.

At least that is what he thought he would do.

Now getting into a boat from the water is not such an easy matter.

An ordinary-sized person has all he wants to undertake in doing it.

When a big, clumsy Dutchman essays the task, its difficulty assumes gigantic proportions.

Schagenfeldt swam to the boat, caught hold of the side, and tried to climb in.

The boat at once tipped over and dipped water.

That big Dutchman was bound to get in, however, tip or no tip.

He pulled himself up and got one big foot on the gunwale.

Then, as he was about to flop over into the boat, the latter gave a flop of its own, and threw him into the stream.

He hung on to the side, and, in consequence, the boat turned bottom up.

Schagenfeldt soon recovered himself to see the boat calmly floating upside down a few yards away.

The oars had floated off, and were now out of his reach.

"I don't understand dot boadt," muttered the Dutchman. "Maype if I was triedit to glimb up it again it turn over again already."

Full of this idea he now swam to the boat, and tried to get on the bottom.

It was not an easy task by any means.

The Dutchman puffed, and sweated, and slid, and slipped, but at last got up and sat on the bottom out of the reach of the water.

"Dot dime I was savedt," he muttered. "Off I don't do dot I was peen drownedt."

Meanwhile those quiet twins were watching the show from the shore and taking it all in.

While he had been fooling around the boat the Dutchman might have reached shore, but that never entered his head.

There he sat on the overturned boat like Robinson Crusoe on his raft, wringing out his wet clothes, and contemplating the bank with an ineffable longing.

"That old fellow don't know much more than Clem," laughed Timmy.

"Not quite as much, I think."

"Let's watch him and see what he'll do."

"It's the best fun we've had yet."

After the Dutchman had sat on the boat awhile he seemed to have an idea.

It had suddenly entered his head that there was no use in being idle, and so he thought he would take a smoke.

He pulled out a big rubber tobacco pouch, the contents having been but slightly dampened by Schagenfeldt's upset.

The next thing was to procure a pipe, and this our astaway took out of one of his coat pockets, blowing through it to see that it drew well.

"Take my beans if he isn't going to smoke," chuckled Jimmy.

"He'll start a vineyard on that boat if he stays out here much longer."

"Watch him get a light."

Our German friend, having filled his pipe, now hunted through his pockets, and after a long search found a metallic match-box, from which he took a match.

This he lighted by striking on the bottom of the box, and presently his pipe was lighted.

Then he puffed away like a major, the smoke wreaths floating away lazily on the still air.

The boat was meanwhile drifting slowly down stream toward a point of land which ran out into the water some little distance.

The Dutchman did not appear to notice this, however, but went on smoking as contentedly as though at home in his easy-chair.

It was growing darker now every minute, and the boys were hoping that the Dutchman would have sense enough to swim to land.

That did not seem to bother him, though, for he smoked on, and presently stretched himself out on the boat bottom for a snooze.

"That takes the cake!" cried the twins.

"He'd be satisfied anywhere, so long as he could have his pipe."

However, the Dutchman's nap was soon brought to a conclusion by the boat running aground.

Then Clem and some of the men on the place came along looking for him.

The boys joined them, and Schagenfeldt, having evidently forgotten all about his bath, went up to the house with the party without a word.

He spent the evening with old Peter in his study, and the next morning went back to the city—trunks, parcels and everything.

"I come ub some dime again to see you, mein friendt," he said to Mr. Nettlebone. "I hadt a goodt dime already, und was moche bleased."

"More fun for us then," laughed the twins, winking at each other.

Now that the Dutchman was gone, Clem and Yum Bung would come in for their innings.

The twins had not got through with them, but had simply been giving them a rest.

There was lots of fun coming, however, as we shall see.

About this time the colored people of the vicinity, and in fact for many miles around, held a camp-meeting.

The camp was in the woods, on the shores of a large lake, seven or eight miles away.

It was a very romantic spot, and those who could enjoy the beauties of nature, whether they were or were not in search of religion of the red-hot kind, were fond of visiting the place.

The lake itself was some five miles across at the widest part, but considerably more than that in length, though at places scarcely half a mile wide.

The camp ground was just on the further side of the widest part, and people generally drove around, a safer but longer route than crossing in boats.

One morning an aged darky, a friend of Clem's, came along, and, seeing the big moke standing by the fence, said:

"Is yo' gwine to de cam'-meetin', Mistah Brown?"

"When am it, sah?" asked Clem, looking up.

"De session 'gins dis mo'nin', an' las' froo de week. Dere'll be a great outpo'in ob de sperit, I tol' yo'?"

"Spec's dey will when dem niggahs gits to gwine hearty. Reckon more'n half ob dem'll be bilin'."

"Yo' misconstrues my 'marks, sah. Dey will be full ob de sperit."

"Yas'r, dat's what I tol' yous. Gorry, de way some ob dem dandy coons fom de willage kin put down the peach brandy!"

"I'se 'fraid yo' is a backslidah fom grace, Mistah Brown. Don' yo' fink it's time dere was a 'waken-in'?"

"Yo'll fin' Clem Brown as wide awake as any ob dem niggahs, Uncle Jo, an' don' yo' fo'git it," replied Clem, with a laugh.

"I'se 'fraid you hasn't got 'ligion, my son."

"Oh, yas'r, I has; I got'em bad down in Souf Carolina, rolled ober on de groun' an' hollered glory an' froff at de mouf, an' got de sistahs so excited dey smash all de crockery."

"Am dat de way you got um?" asked the old uncle, getting excited. "Dat war a bressed 'sperence, sah."

"Yas'r, dey ain't no half way business 'bout dis chile. Tol' yo' what, Uncle Jo, de ol' debil had a big tussle fo' dis niggah, but de Lor' he jes' say he's gwine to hab me, an' he gib dat ol' Satan fits."

"Bress de Lor'."

"Twar a hard fight, I tol' yo', an' I gibs six ob de deacons brack eyes afo' dey could hol' me down, but de angel ob de Lor' he held de winnin' trick an' got me 'way fom de debil at las'."

"Glory hallelujum!"

"Yas'r, dat's what I says, Uncle Jo, an' if any ob dem no 'count coons fom de Norf says I isn't 'ligious, I smash deir jaws fo' 'em."

But Uncle Jo did not doubt Clem's sincerity, but rather gloried in his way of enforcing it.

"Den yo'll be dar, sah?" he asked.

"Wall, now, I shed jes' 'mark dat I will, my ol' frien'."

"De bes' preachahs fom all 'roun' will be dar. Pa'son Smif, de fellah wif de hardes' fis' in de circuit, he'm gwine to be dar, an' de way he poun' de Bible am a warnin' to sinnahs."

"All de high-tone gals fom de willage is gwine, too, I reckon?"

"An' dere'll be Deakin Thumah, wha' kin shout loudah dan anybody—he am comin'."

"Specs dey'll hab lots ob good fings to eat, too," put in Clem, who was worldly enough to have an eye on the creature comforts of this life.

"An' Sistah Toppin', de great singin' 'vivalist, she am comin'. Tol' you what, boy, de sperit ob de Lawd

am loose in de lan' when dat ol' woman start de music."

"An' lots ob spahkin' an' dancin' afo' church hours, I s'pose?"

"Dare'll be preachin' an' singin' an' prayin' an' wrastlin' wif de debil, an'—"

"Yas'r, I knows all dat," interrupted Clem, "but how am we gwine to git dar?"

"De Lor' will probide, honey."

"Well, de Lor' don' keep a livery-stable or biah out boats, an' yo' don' s'pose folks am gwine to walk or swim obah, does yo'?"

"Dere will be a way, chile," answered the old darky, less practical in his ideas than Clem.

"Yas'r, ef we jump 'roun' fus' an' stirfings up, an' dat wha' I'se gwine to do."

"Wall, I sees yo' dar, sah."

"Bet yo' life, Uncle Jo."

During the forenoon Clem met Yum Bung, and, thinking to give his friend a treat, said:

"How yo' like to go to de col'd camp-meetin' to-morrer, Mistah Yum?"

"So be," answered Yum, blandly. "No s'be cam'-meetin'. What him be?"

"De col'd folks from eberywhere go into de woods an' has preachin' an' singin', an' all dat."

"Niggee man hab Sunnay-cool in ee woods, hab pleachee, allee same meetin'-house?"

"Yo' hab got it straight dis time, my frien'."

"Clemmy wantee Yum go meetin', allee same good lillee bloy."

"Wall, it's difent, yo' know, an' dere am lots ob fun gwine on."

"Yum likee fun allee same oder man. Yum one o' bloys."

"Den we bof ob us go obah to-morrer mo'nin', and stay all day."

"Clemmy askee boss, tellee ole man go meetin'?"

"Dat am all right, sah; de boss make no 'jections to dat."

"All lite, Yum go 'long o' Clemmy, so he no gettee in tubble."

"Wha' yo' take me fo'? 'Specs I gits in trubble in chu'ch? Co'se not!" and Clem's look of indignation would have paralyzed a rock.

Clem asked and obtained permission of Mr. Nettlebone that evening to attend camp-meeting the next day with Yum, the old man's only provision being that he should come home sober.

"I come home sobah as a deakin, boss, I gibs yo' my wo'd," said Clem, with a grin. "Yo' nebah knowed me to git tight, did yo', boss?"

"Well, don't do it, that's all, or you'll have to look for another place."

"Wouldn't do it fo' any money, boss, I tol' yo'."

"All right; then you may go."

Of course the boys learned all about the proposed trip and the camp-meeting, and determined to take in the later, though on their own account, and not in company with Clem or Yum.

"We never saw a darky camp-meeting," said Timmy. "Suppose we scoop it in?"

"Right you are, and have slathers of fun."

Having settled that he was to go to camp-meeting, Clem's next trouble was how to get there.

He did not care to walk all the way, and although he had the cheek to ask for a wagon, he knew he would not get it.

However, he went down into the town that evening, and meeting his old enemy, now friend, Mr. Peter Bullwagon, broached the subject to him.

"Am yo' gwine to de meetin' to-morrow, Petey?"

"Wall, I guess, and mo' dan me is gwine, too, honey. We'se gwine to get up a load de fus' t'ing in de mo'nin'."

"Hab yo' got room fo' dis chile in de wagon?"

"Ob co'se we hab, an' we's gwine to pass by yo' house."

"Don' yo' go 'long by de tavern nex' to old Jones', den, or yo' won' get to de groun's till night."

"No, sah. We's gwine straight fo' de camp."

"Bout what time, Mistah Bullwagon, does de procession disburse himself?"

"De wagon will go by at eight o'clock sha'p, an' if yo' isn't on hand yo'll get lef', I tol' yo'."

"I'll be dere, sah."

And Clem was there the next morning when the big wagon drove up full to overflowing with colored love-liness.

There was Clara Jefferson, who had lately eloped with a coachman, sitting on the front seat, arrayed in a gorgeous frock, while a half dozen black-and-tan beauties were within easy range.

Mr. Bullwagon drove, and Mr. Scipio Jackson blew a big horn, Mr. Rafe Tompkins standing at the rear, and keeping the ladies from falling off at the end seats.

Every shade of color from a light tan to a sable black was represented, and the variety of toilets was something marvelous.

Phoebe White had on a red and white striped canvas, with a green plush jacket, yellow ribbons, and sky-scraper hat, and looked too stunning for anything.

Rachel Black wore a yellow and blue polka dot dress, with bronze boots, pink stockings and red gloves, her bonnet resembling a conflagration.

George Henry Obadah wore white duck, a collar that hid his ears, and a purple scarf, and was the dandiest coon in the wagon.

Patrick Henry Steelyard came next, in a blue velvet coat, yellow vest, brown breeches, checker-board gaiters, and a white hat with a black band.

Oh, the latest styles were well represented and a fashion plate would have gone wild with envy if it could have seen that sweet-scented crowd.

"I'se brunged my frien' along," said Clem, as the wagon stopped.

Our colored friend himself was gotten up regardless in a suit that defies description, as the newspapers



say, and Yum was arrayed as nearly like him as possible.

"Belly glad see Clemmy friends," piped up the heathen.

"Good-mo'nin', Mistah Brown," giggled the ladies.

"Glad to see de bred'ren an' sistahs," said Clem himself.

"Kin yo' fin' a seat fo' yo's'ef?" asked Mr. Bullwagon.

"Wall, sah, ef I klean't, den I sot down in de bes' lookin' gal's lap," and Clem let out a laugh that put them all in good humor.

Of course he and Yum found places after that, and away rattled the big wagon down the hill, the horns tooting and the brothers and sisters shouting and singing with all their might.

"We am on de road to glory, chillen," bawled Clem.

"We am climbin' up de golden stailah."

"Clem Brown, ef yo' don' stop ticklin' me in de ribs, I tol' my husband," cried the blushing Samantha Buckwheat, giving Clem a box on the ear.

"Clar to goodness, I didn't," protested Clem. "I war on'y gittin' ready to walk de heavenly street."

"Wall, yo' neednter walk ovah my co'ns ef you is," spoke up another sister, and then all hands laughed again.

On they went, bumping and jolting until at last they came in sight of the lake.

On the other side was the camp, but to reach it they must still ride a long distance.

"Dere am Marse Squire Tiptop's sail-boat," exclaimed Clem.

"Don' yo' s'pose he'd took us ober ef we axed him?"

"Guess I could do it jes' as well as him," sniffed Clem.

"G'way, chile."

"Wha' yo' know 'bout han'lin' a boat, honey?"

"Bully sailah you is, I reckon."

Clem turned up his nose at these sallies, and retorted:

"Wall, chillen, ef yo' knowed 's much about sailin' a boat as dis chile, you'se could talk."

"Where you eber sail um?"

"Down in Souf Ca'lina, ob co'se, an' I tooks yo' all across now, ef yo' says de wo'd."

"Won' dat be squisite?"

"Bettah dan ridin' in de ca'lage all dem miles."

"Dribe down to de watah, Mistah Bullwagon, an' les' see de boat."

On the shore of the lake, moored to a little dock, was a cat-rigged sail-boat, about twenty feet in length.

She was generally used to take out pleasure parties, but just now no one was using her.

Clem knew something about boats, and would have declared himself competent to run an ocean steamer, for the sake of showing off.

The boat was simply tied up at the dock, and Clem concluded to borrow it for the run across the lake.

"Jes' yo' get in, chillen," he commanded, "an' I show yo' wha' I know 'bout sail-boats."

The party needed no second invitation, and piled on board at once.

The horses and wagon were left under a shed, and then preparations for the voyage were begun.

"Ladies, yo' can sit roun', an' de gentleums kin help de skippah get undah way."

The boat was unmoored, and the crew, under Clem's directions, hoisted up sail.

Then our amateur yachtsman grabbed the tiller and the vessel moved out from the dock.

"Make fas' dem ropes, ge'men, an' b'ar down on 'em some mo', so's to get de mos' win' we kin."

The halyards were hauled taut, and the vessel being well-trimmed, she sailed in fine style.

Clem held the tiller, and for some time all went well.

When they got out in the middle of the lake, however, the wind freshened up till it blew a regular gale.

The vessel heeled over to one side, and all hands crowded up to windward to avoid a ducking.

"Don' yo' be 'fraid," said Clem. "I brung you out all right, safe to de promis' land."

He would have done so well enough, if he hadn't tried to show off more.

He kept the sails trimmed close.

Of course the boat heeled over more than ever.

All hands climbed up to the weather-rail, and some of the dusky maidens began to feel sick.

Yum stuck close to Clem, who now clung for dear life to the tiller.

"Ef somefing don' bus', we'se all right," chattered that ancient mariner, trembling with fright, and hanging on to the tiller; "but if dey should be a break, de Lor' help us."

#### CHAPTER XXV.

As Clem had predicted, all would have been well if nothing broke.

But something did break, and all at once.

Somehow or other Clem could never tell how it happened, but it did, all the same.

The boom suddenly swung across deck with a terrible crash, and swept a dozen or more of the party into the water.

In about two shakes the boat had capsized, and the whole party was swimming around in the drink.

Such a yelling and howling was never heard except at a dog pond.

Over went the colored dudes and dudettes, fust, feathers and all, and it became washing day with a vengeance in a short time.

Clem went under like a stone, but soon came to the top, puffing like a darky porpoise.

Not far away was the bottom of the capsized boat, shining like a big iron pot in the sun.

Thither Clem made his way, swimming clumsily and panting like a tired dog.

He was the first to reach a place of safety, and he quickly climbed up out of reach of the waves.

Others quickly followed from all sides, and the prospect was good for overcrowding the keel and giving all hands another free bath.

The first thing Clem saw when he settled himself was Yum Bung trying to clamber up the slippery sides of the overturned boat.

Having saved himself, Clem must, of course, look out for his friend.

"Jes' yo' wait a bit, chile, an' I sables yo' f'om drownin'," he cried.

Then he reached down and grabbed hold of Yum's outstretched hand.

That was all right, but the next thing was to get Yum up.

He pulled and got the Chinaman half way up, when the boat gave a lurch and settled somewhat.

Too much colored loveliness had been piled upon it for safety.

Those darky girls were scrambling or being lifted up in all directions.

The result of the lurch was to cause Clem to lose his grip on his chum's hand.

Yum at once began to slide downward toward the dancing waves with great velocity.

Then Clem showed what a ready wit, combined with luck, can do for a man.

Drowning men catch at straws, they say, and so why shouldn't he do the great catch act to save his friend?

He let fly one of his big paws, determined to catch whatever came in reach.

And, with rare good luck, the first thing those dusky fingers closed upon was Yum's pig-tail.

Clem took his queue this time without any trouble, and held on to it.

Yum slid down into the water, but there was a limit to his sliding, and that limit was measured by the length of his hirsute decoration.

He was brought up in short order, and uttered a howl of pain.

"Mush' min' a little f'ing like dat, chile," cried Clem.

Then the big darky straddled the keel, and hung on to Yum's queue with both hands.

At every motion of the boat the Chinaman would bob up and down like a cork.

Clem did his duty, however, and held on to that pig-tail like dissolution to the heel of an African.

"Yo' trus' to me, honey, an' yo' nebbah get drown-ed," he remarked.

But the thing was anything rather than funny to Yum.

He was on his back and couldn't get anywhere else as long as Clem held on to this top-knot, and the more he kicked the worse it was.

To Clem all these struggles were the frantic efforts of a drowning man to save himself, and he resolved that Yum should not drown on any account.

Consequently he gripped that pig-tail all the tighter and did his level best to pull Yum up on the boat.

"Don' yo' gibe up, honey, I'se got yo' fas' an' tight," he said, cheerfully.

And all the time the boat was bobbing up and down like a buoy gone wild, and at every bob poor Yum Bung got a bump on the head, or a mouthful of water, or a yank at his tail, and life was aught but a bed of roses.

"Oh, blaze, lettee go piggee-tail!" he yelled.

"Pullee tail out by ee loots. No can laise anosee lun."

"Don' yo' be 'fraid ob dat," laughed Clem, misinterpreting the remark. "Dat tail hol' out long as I want'er hol' on, an' I isn't gwine to let youse drown fo' a cent."

And neither did he, though he might have banged Yum's brains out if he had been given a little more time.

Meanwhile the dusky beaux and belles had clambered up the side, and now covered the entire bottom, crowding upon one another in a regular human pyramid.

"Don' youse push me, bred'ren," protested Clem, whose position on the keel was disputed by several of the males. "Don' yo' see I'se reskin my life to sables my brudder?"

"Let de headen drown, an' make room fo' de chillen ob de Lawd," said Mr. Bullwagon. "Dat Chinyman amn't ob no 'count in de kingdom."

"Bredren, les' hab p'rars," spoke up Brother Steelyard. "Dis am de p'inted time; we'se bettah go in heaby on de ag'ry, ef we wants ter get ter glory."

"Sister Samantha, won' yo' start up a hymn? I feel dat dis am—"

"Bress goodness, de boat am a sinkin'."

"Oh, yo' wicked sinnahs, dat wha' yo' gits fo' steal-in' dis yer sloop."

"Don' yo' beliebe it, bred'ren; de boat am in de ser-bice ob de Lor' and we isn't gwine to drown."

"Glory to goodness, dat am a com'f't. Brudder Scipio, tell yo' sper'ence."

There was the liveliest kind of a time going on upon the bottom of that boat.

First, all hands were scrambling to secure the best places, regardless of the wishes of others.

Next, everybody was singing or praying or shouting, all at once and all with the utmost vigor of lung power they were capable of.

Then the boat danced about so that no one knew at what time it might fire them all off into the lake.

Lastly, the whole crowd consisted of excitable, emotional darkies on the way to camp-meeting, and that told the whole story.

Poor Yum at last got tired of Clem's efforts in his behalf, and with a vigorous kick broke away from the latter's grasp.

Then Clem lost his balance and rolled off into the water, carrying Sister Jefferson and Sister Samantha Buckwheat along with him.

Brother Steelyard tried to seize the coffee-and-rail-colored hand of Clara, but only succeeded in falling off and carrying Mr. Bullwagon the same road.

Then such a screeching and floundering as there was!

"It am all on account of dat headen Chinyman," wailed a sister with a complexion two shades blacker than charcoal.

"Bredren, yo' mus' fly f'om de wraf to come," belched a tan-colored brother.

"Let him drown, dat's wha' I say!" added a sister whose skin was a fantasy in dirty browns. "Dere ain' no room fo' anybody but col'd folks on de shinin' sho'."

In the midst of the confusion, when Yum and Clem were struggling to regain a seat on the boat's bottom, along came a good-sized vessel whose skipper had seen the accident at a distance.

He ran down, right into the middle of the floundering darkies, and his crew began picking them up one at a time.

"Bress de good Lor', we'se done been sabled f'om de ol' debil dis trip," shouted a "brudder" with a voice like a fog horn.

Then every one of those excited male niggers tried to get aboard the new vessel, leaving the sisters to shift for themselves.

The skipper and his men would not allow any such funny business, however, and they proceeded to pick up the she coons first before permitting the dandy mokes to get aboard.

Finally the whole cargo, complexions carefully assorted, was got on board, and somebody who knew all hands was asked to take account of stock.

"Call de roll, Brudder Bullwagon," said Clem, with his perennial grin. "I'se heah, to begin wif, an' so am my frien'."

"Yas'r, an' ef it hadn' er been fo' youse wese had neber been in dis yer predicament. Won' we look putty walkin' up to der preacher's stan' all wet an' drippin'?"

"Heap yo' know 'bout mindin' boats, niggah. Yo' couldn't sail a mud scow, yo' couldn'."

"Serbe yo' right ef we frowed youse obah bo'd wif de Chinyman 'long ob yo'."

In fact, poor Clem was in decidedly bad favor, and there is no knowing what might have happened if the brave old salt that ran the frigate had not interposed.

"Look here, nigs," he expostulated, "if you don't take a reef in your jaw tackle I'll chuck the hull of you over into the lake and let you swim ashore."

That settled the business in very short order.

The belligerent darkies sobered down at once, but Clem sniffed a sniff of defiance, and said:

"Jes' let dem loose fo' a momen', boss, and let dem all come fo' dis chile. I jes' like to pa'lyze a few ob dem pert niggahs once, an' I kin do it, boss, ebery time."

"I'll flatten you out so thin you'll be bigger than my mainsail if you don't shut up," remarked the captain, turning to Clem and expectorating on his hands.

"H'm! I ain't got no qua'l wif white folks, on'y wif dem pert, sugar-col'd mokes," answered Clem, patronizingly.

"He, he! Clemmy talkee likee lillee bloy, no got blains; no sabe noffin'," chuckled Yum, who had come up smiling, as usual. "Nigee man got big head, lillee in um."

"Ef yo' war biggah, my headen frien', I smash yo' jaw," muttered Clem, "but I spares yo' dis time 'count ob yo' bein' so little."

The captain of the sloop, having placed a buoy to find the wreck by when he came back, now stood off and headed for the other side of the lake.

The sun came out hot and strong and dried the clothes of the excursionists, but the glory had departed from their toilets, and they were a sorry-looking lot at the best.

However, they were not going to be cheated out of going to the camp-meeting on that account.

"We may not 'cite de envy ob de hull congrega-tion," remarked Clem, philosophically, "but we is in s'arch ob de trufe, an' we'se gwine to git dar jes' de same, wifout regard to close."

The skipper landed them at the camp grove, but first collected a dollar a head all around for having performed this service.

There was a great deal of the mental gymnastics, known as kicking, performed on this account, but the captain was inexorable.

"If you don't want to pay it, you needn't," he said. "But then I'll take you back and perhaps have you all arrested for stealing that boat."

"Ef yo' 'rest anybody, 'rest Clem Brown. It war him wha' done it," remarked Mr. Bullwagon.

"No, I'll arrest the lot of you, so you'd better to make up your minds at once."

That settled the case, and the dollars were forth-coming without delay.

Having landed his passengers and seen them star for the camp, the skipper skipped out, picking up the overturned boat on his return and towing her to the dock.

When the pilgrims arrived at the camp the meeting was in full swing, the enthusiasm being at fever heat.

The very moment that Clem got a chance he started a hymn at the top of his lungs, and all his crowd joined in.

Then he called on Brother Steelyard to lead in prayer, and Sister Samantha Buckwheat to sing and Miss Jefferson to tell her experience.

After this he started to tell his own, when the leader, a coffee-colored coon with a bilious look, jumped up and cried excitedly:



"Allow me to ax yo', Mistah Brown, who am conductin' this yer meetin', you or de subscribah?"

"Reckin' I is taken a han' in, frien' Black," responded Clem.

"Takin' a han', yo' call it? Yas'r, two han's, an' mighty big ones, too!"

"Wall, I reckon I is capable of runnin' de t'ing, Brudder Black, wifout none ob yo' 'sistance."

"Yo' am a interferin', sah, wif de rights ob de subjeck."

"Den let de subjeck be changed, Brudder Black, an' de soonah de bettah. Brederen, les' sing de hymn mahked fo' hund'ed an' leben."

"If dis meetin' am to be turned inter a show fo' no-count niggahs, it's time 'spectable col'd folks got out'n it," spoke up Brother Black.

Clem started his hymn, and half of the crowd joined in, the other half keeping quiet.

When one verse had been sung, Mr. Black yelled out:

"Bred'ren an' sistahs, I mobe we adjourn an' let dese scullions hab de meetin' to deirselves. Guess de grove am big enuff fo' two meetin's."

At this a large number got up and followed Mr. Black to a big tent a few hundred feet away, where a second meeting was started.

"Dem am de goats, but we am de sheep!" yelled Clem, jumping upon the platform. "Don' yo' be goats, brederen, but come an' jine our ban' an' git to heaben. Brudder Obadiah will now spoke to de congregation."

Brother Obadiah then let off a regular blue-blazes, fire-and-brimstone discourse, frequently interrupted by groans, amens and glories.

Suddenly from the other meeting a strain of exquisite music was heard, and the speaker paused to listen.

Two boys were singing, their voices being unaccompanied by others, but so rich and full was the sound that the woods fairly rang.

All was quiet save the two voices, the darkies listening in rapt attention, and stealing away quietly, three or four at a time, so as to get nearer to the entrancing sound.

Clem was as much delighted as any one, for he recognized the voices as belonging to the quiet twins.

He speedily realized, however, that there would not be a corporal's guard at his meeting if the boys continued to sing for the others.

"Wha' bring dem boys obah heah?" he muttered. "Dey am up to some debilment, I'se shuah!"

The darkies were now sliding away from about the platform by the dozen, and Clem saw that something must be done.

In a pause in the boys' singing he jumped up and said:

"Brederen, dat dere music b'longs to dis crowd. I hired it myse'f, but it hab gone astray."

"Lillie bloy singee bullee, takee way clowd," giggled Yum. "Gettee um here, bling clowd back, so be."

"Dat am de talk, brederen. Les' get de music fo' our own meetin'."

At this there was a general stampede for the other meeting, Clem, Yum, Bullwagon and Steelyard being in advance.

The two factions came together with a rush, but the boys skipped out, not caring to get mixed up in the struggle.

One excited sister banged Clem over the head with a hymn book and another grabbed Yum by his pig-tail and proceeded to test its fixedness.

Mr. Bullwagon found himself in the clutches of two very muscular Christians, who hammered him as if he had been a chunk of iron on an anvil.

Sister Samantha got foul of another sister and pulled her frizzy bangs till she yelled for mercy.

The struggle soon became fast and furious, and Clem, getting excited and breaking away from his Amazon enemy, was giving the brethren particular fits, when the cry was raised that the police were coming.

Then it was suddenly discovered that the boys were missing, and that there was really nothing to fight about.

Mr. Black thereupon called upon the quarreling brethren to desist, and said glibly:

"I mobe dat we reo'ganize an' hab dis meetin' conducted undah mo' harmonious surroundin's. I resigns de leadahship in favor ob Mistah Brown."

"Don' wan' it, chile," said Clem. "Dis ge'man wasn't cut out fo' dat kin' ob wo'k."

Then Brother Obadiah jumped upon a stump and belched forth:

"Brederen, les' fo'git all our diff'rences, an' washup togeder in perfec' anonymosness. We'se come heah fo' to praise de Lawd an' not mash each oder's jaws."

"Bress de Lawd!" shouted the sisters.

Then the meeting was once more in harmony, and the services continued until dinner-time.

After that all the brothers and sisters were on good terms, and when the evening meeting started up the best of good feeling prevailed.

Things were going on swimmingly, and an old aunt was telling her experience at a forty-mile trot and on a high key, when suddenly, from the trees' darkness overhead, came a voice:

"Rats!"

Then there was great excitement, and everybody began to look for the offender.

The speaker rattled on more volubly than ever, when she was again interrupted.

A figure all in red, with horns and a long tail, suddenly dove down from a tree and landed right in front of the old woman.

"De debil am broke loose fo' sho'!" was the cry.

That was too much for the brothers and sisters, and they got a move on them at once.

The stand was deserted in ten seconds, and the meeting adjourned to distant parts.

"Guess I amn't afraid of de ol' debil," muttered Clem, after the first excitement was over. "I'se gwine back to hab a wrastle wif am."

Then he started off, followed by Yum, who didn't care to be left alone with a lot of excitable coons.

When the two reached the platform, Clem saw something red in the middle of it.

"Dere he am now!" he exclaimed.

"Clemmy heap big fool, so be," laughed Yum. "Debil only bloomstick wif led shirtee on."

"G'way, chile, guess I know bettah dan dat."

"Yum show Clemmy; lillie bloy makee fool aglain."

Then that brave Chinaman jumped on the platform prepared to do great things.

Suddenly, however, the red object on the platform, which the lanterns and the light of the moon showed but obscurely, sprang up with a yell and began to dance.

It was all in red, had horns and a tail and the ugliest face ever seen.

There was no doubt about it, the devil had surely appeared.

"Cussee, debil gettee Yum!" cried the Chinaman, and beating a hasty retreat, left the fiend in possession.

When the poor fellow had gone the monster suddenly removed his hideous face and revealed the grinning phiz of Timmy Bing.

"Great snap that," he remarked, as he folded up his tail and hurried off to join his brother.

The boys had had all the fun they wanted at the camp-meeting, and after this latest joke upon the coons they concluded to drive home.

They had driven down in a light wagon, and they now hitched up and started off toward the Nettlebone estate, leaving the darkies making things lively at the meeting.

They drove around the lake, and on the way home passed the shed where the excursion party had left their wagon and team.

"What if that team should be missing?" laughed Jimmy.

"Then those poor coons would have to walk."

"If there weren't any women in the party it would be a good joke to make them do it."

"Too rough on rats, that."

"So I think."

However, there were others who thought differently from the boys.

The man who owned the shed had a lot of friends call on him that afternoon, and he thought he might as well borrow the wagon and horses and go for a ride, not expecting the party back until night.

Consequently he drove off to a town three or four miles away, bent on enjoying himself.

Now Clem and the others were lucky enough to catch an unexpected lift in the shape of a sail across the lake not long after their horses had been driven off.

The skipper who had taken them up after the upset concluded to take them back, and returning, made them the proposition.

If they did not accept they would have to walk around, and so they piled into the boat willingly enough.

Others went with them and the skipper made a good thing of it.

It was quite late when they landed, and Mr. Bullwagon went at once for the horses.

Neither they nor the wagon nor the man who owned the shed nor any of his family could be found.

"Wha' yo' gwine to do?" asked Clem, when the news went around.

"Wait a bit. De man hab borrowed dem hosses a little while, I guess."

So they waited under the shed one, two, three hours, but no man or horses appeared.

They waited till after midnight, but still no vehicle nor steeds came in sight, and there was the prospect of a five-mile walk before them.

"Dat fellah hab gone off to de nex' town, got bilin' drunk, and won't be home till mo'nin', like's not," sighed Clem. "De nex' time I go to camp-meetin' I stays at hum."

## CHAPTER XXVI.

We left Clem and his friends waiting in the shed for the wagon and horses.

They had a five-mile walk before them unless those horses returned, and it was now alter midnight.

Such was the interesting condition of affairs when last we heard from the party.

"Dat am all de camp-meetin' dis chile wan's to see," remarked Clem, "ef dat am de way it's gwine to turn out."

"It am all yo' fault," blubbered Sister Samantha. "We didn' wanter stay till ebenin', but yo' said fo' to do it, an' dis am wha' comes ob it."

"Mebbe it am my fault dat de debil come down fom de trees."

"Dat whar you'm right," answered Mr. Bullwagon; "it am all de fault ob you an' de Chinyman."

"How be? Me no bling debil, me no likee, me goodee bloy," interposed Yum.

"Kean't help it, you am de cause ob all de trubble."

"Yum no 'stand; Yum good fellah."

"What am dat?" cried Mr. Obadiah, suddenly.

It was the sound of voices not far away. Also the noise of wheels.

"Dere am de wagon," cried Clem. "We am gettin' out ob our tribulation, bredren."

In a few moments the big wagon drove up and the driver came to a sudden stop, nearly pitching head-first off the seat.

"I'se a-climbin' up de golden stairs," he sang. "an'

I won't go home till mo'nin', till Gab'el blows his ho'n."

"Guess yo' hab been takin' seberal ho'ns, my frien'," remarked Clem.

So he had, and so had his family and friends who filled the wagon.

"Dat am all right," he hiccupped. "Didn' think we'd be so long, but de hosses was drunk an' took de wrong road."

"Well, sah, de right road fo' yo' to take now am straight out ob dis yer vehicle an' right into de house," put in Clem.

"Yo' hab got dem animiles all sweaty an' ti'ed out. How yo' 'specs we drive 'em?" added Peter.

"Dem hosses am all right. I drike yo' home, 'cause dey knows me."

"No, yo' don't," laughed Clem. "Bredren, les' clean 'em out."

Then the brethren made a rush, in front and behind, and yanked the party out of the wagon in short order.

After that they piled into the vehicle, Peter taking the front seat and driving away when all hands were inside.

It was a big load for the horses, and they were tired out, but Peter did not spare the whip and got all the speed possible out of them.

He let Clem and Yum out at Mr. Nettlebone's gate, and as he was about to drive away asked:

"We am gwine to get up anoder pahty de day aftah to-morrer night, Mistah Brown. Won' yo' come along?"

"No, sah," answered Clem most decidedly. "I know when I hab got enuff ob a good t'ing. Good-night, brudder."

"Yum Bung no piggy, know good sling when him get it. Goodee-night, bluddee," chuckled the Celestial.

Then the wagon drove on, the party inside shouting and singing, while the two belated pilgrims went into the house, Pat Malone having waited up for them.

"Faix, yez are a foine couple av pantaloons, yez are," said he, "to be waltzin' into the house at two in the mornin'. If I war the masher, it's discharged ye'd be afore daybreak."

"Spec I'd wo'k fo' a Irisher?" snorted Clem. "Reckin not, honey."

"Ilishman no good, talkee too muchee," commented Yum.

Then those two jokers went up to bed, Clem's room being nearer than Yum's.

As the big darky entered he saw a light shining on the bed, and in it stood the red devil that had so frightened him at the camp.

"I've got you now," howled the fiend in a hollow voice, waving his arms and shaking his tail.

"De Lawd sabe us," yelled Clem, as he made a bolt through the open door.

Now Yum had heard a noise, and had come back to see what it meant.

Consequently Clem ran slap against him, and both darky and Mongolian went down in a heap on the floor.

Clem thought of course, that the demon had seized him, and began to cry piteously:

"Oh, please, good Mistah Debil, don' took me dis time; took de Chinyman, an' I neber say nuffin' agin yo' any mo'."

"Clemmy big fool, no gottee sense," jabbered Yum, trying to get up, for Clem was now kneeling right on his stomach.

"Begorry, phat's all this n'ise about?" asked Pat Malone, coming up-stairs.

"Debil get in my room, wanter taken dis chile away."

"May he floy away wid yez then for a fool," sputtered Pat. "Get to bed an' don't be afther alarmin' the hull house."

"Drike away de debil fus', good Mistah Pat, an' den I go to bed."

"Faix, there's nothing here at all," said Pat, entering the room.

"Gettee lup, Clemmy clush Yum's belly, beakee libs allee piecee," chattered the poor Chinaman.

Then Clem got up, looked into his room and became satisfied that there was nothing there to hurt him.

"Dat am bery strange," he observed, in a puzzled manner. "Fus' I see de debil, an' den I don' see nuffin'."

"Niggy man heap lot clazy, gettee diunk on ginnee, hab snake in um bootee."

"Go to bed, you natheral," cried Pat, indignantly, giving Clem a shove and sending him into the middle of the room.

Poor Clem gave a startled glance all around, but there was nothing to be seen except the moonlight.

Master Mephisto, otherwise Timmy Bing, had fled during the scuffle between Clem and Yum, and he and his twin were now laughing over the affair in their own room.

"That imp srap was the best yet," tittered Timmy, as he removed his red tights, took off his horned cap and coiled up his tail.

He had worn the suit under his own clothes, and could make the change in a few minutes, having done so before climbing the tree overlooking the speaker's stand.

Afterward he had heard Clem and Yum arrive, and, putting on the suit over his night-shirt, had literally played the devil with Clem for the second time that night.

Satisfied that he was alone, Clem locked and bolted his door, placed a chair against it and shut and fastened the window so as to keep the devil from coming in again during the night.

The next day, as you may easily suppose, Clem was rather more sleepy and lazy than usual.

After dinner, feeling the need of a nap, he hunted



himself out a comfortable spot on the off side of a haystack and proceeded to go to sleep.

He was sound and fast in the embrace of the drowsy god, when along came those quiet twins.

"Twig the slumbering Adonis," whispered Timmy. "Shall we shake him up?"

"No. But he must be cold, poor fellow; so let's cover him over."

Then Timmy began pulling out the hay from the stack, Jimmy assisting him as soon as he saw the racket.

Those two young innocents piled hay upon that snoozing mope till all but his head and face was covered three feet deep.

"That isn't enough," cackled Jimmy, and more hay was thrown on the dormant ducky till he resembled a young haystack himself.

"Let's leave him now," laughed Timmy, "and pretty soon we'll come back."

Meanwhile, Clem slept on, the pile of hay over him making him sweat like a young elephant.

He did not wake up, however, and pretty soon along meandered Yum Bung in search of him.

The Chinaman saw the hay, but did not observe Clem's head, and, thinking it a first-class bed, threw himself down upon it quite vigorously.

That did the business for Clem's slumbers, and he awoke with a snap.

"G'way f'om yer," he grunted. "Wha' yo' doing?"

"Dat Clemmy?" remarked Yum, sitting up. "No can see him; where be?"

"G'up out o' dat, I tol' yo'," muttered Clem.

"So be, Clemmy undah ground," remarked the puzzled Chinaman. "Tly to flighten Yum. No can do it."

"Get up, I tol' yo'!" yelled Clem, making a great effort to raise himself.

But Yum sat still, and, looking around, now caught sight of Clem's grinning mug half buried in hay.

"What Clemmy do?" he asked.

"I tol' yo' what I do," spluttered that angry mope.

Then, giving a kick and a splurge, he lifted Yum up in the air and sent him sprawling on the ground, hay and all, in a jiffy.

"Cussie, blazee, Yum bleakee nose," yelled the heathen, as he landed all in a heap on his nasal organ.

"Wha' fo' yo' sit on my 'tummick, den?" asked Clem, laughing heartily. "Dat wha' yo' git fo' it?"

"Clemmy heap big fool, no mo' blains dan lillie bloy, go sleep like pig undee hay stack."

Clem went away laughing, having greatly refreshed himself by his nap, and Yum came on behind, growling like a bear that has lost its cub.

As for the torn haystack, Pat Malone and some of the men had to rebuild it, Clem getting the credit for having torn out one side.

"Dat am allus de way," observed he, when Mr. Joy told him of it. "Dat Chinymen come along, pull de hay out ob de stack an' sit on me, an' den I gets jawed fo' de hull business. Ef dis t'ing keeps up I jes' leaves de plantation."

There was no camp-meeting for Clem that night, and nothing could have induced him to go.

A couple of days after that, however, the twins came to him and asked him if he would not drive them over, as they wanted to see the thing once more before it broke up.

"Wouldn't go to dat camp agin fo' half a dollah, chillen, no, sah."

"Why not?"

"De debil is dere an' suffin am bound fo' to happen. Dere am no luck about de place."

"Nonsense! You can drive us over, I guess. Yum will go along too, if you're afraid."

"G'way, chillen! 'Spec's I'se 'fraid ob anyting?" snickered Clem, tossing his woolly head. "'Deed I isn't; but dere am too much trouble to be taken for a little fun gwine to dat meetin'."

"Well, you can do as you like, but all hands have got to work all night to-night, and we thought we'd get you out of it by having you drive us."

"Am dat so, chillen?" and Clem's eyes were as big as onions.

"That's the straight tip."

"When yo' want to start?"

"In half an hour."

"An' when yo' get back?"

"About ten o'clock."

"An' den I goes to bed an' de oder fellahs goes to work?"

"That's the racket."

"Wall, chillen, I don' car' nuffin' 'bout de meetin' m'self, but seein' as you uns wants ter go, I'd jes' as lebes dibe you obah dere."

"All right, then; go harness the two-seated wagon and get Yum to come."

Now it would have been easy enough for the twins to have driven to the camp alone, as they had done on a former occasion.

There was really no occasion for taking Clem or the Chinaman, as they could have gotten on without them.

However, that would have spoiled the little game they had on hand, and that was not to be thought of.

They had planned having some fun with Clem and Yum on the last night of the camp, and they were fully determined to have it.

In the course of ten minutes the wagon drove around to the front gate with Clem and Yum on the driver's seat.

"Yum no likee meetin', gettee laller gal, go mashee," chirped Yum.

"Dat am de talk," said Clem. "Leabe it to me, an' I fin' de nices' gal yo' eber seed."

The twins now piled into the rear seat, and Clem drove off in the direction of the camp ground.

They arrived at dusk, when the afternoon meeting was over and the evening session had not begun, this time being usually devoted to getting supper.

A full-blooded, strong-minded religion like that of the average negro is very exhausting, and he needs more food than common during camp-meeting time in order to sustain him.

"De heart kean't keep up 'less de stummick am 'tended to," said one old aunty, looking after a great pot of coffee suspended by a hook over a blazing fire of pine knots, "an' de bes' way to open a man's buz-zum an' poah in de sperrit ob de Lor' am to feed him up fus' an' don' leabe no room fo' de ol' debil inside ob him."

The scene at the camp when the boys arrived was a most interesting one.

Here and there among the trees glimmered the white tents, standing out against the dark background of pine wood.

On the edge of the wood glowed the fires of the camp cooks, where meals were being prepared for the worshipers, the forms of men and women, as they appeared for a brief moment in the fire-light and then vanished into the darkness, adding to the weird effect.

Here an old woman was making coffee and roasting sweet potatoes in the hot ashes; there an aged uncle with a few tufts of white wool fringing his bald pate looked after a lot of ears of sweet corn which, wrapped in their husks, were cooking in a bed of coals, being, when ready to eat, more delicate in flavor than if they had been boiled.

Leaving Clem to put up the horses, the boys walked around the edge of the camp looking at the many curious sights to be seen.

At one place, under a canopy, was a number of long tables, made by placing boards on trestles, the seats being formed in the same manner, though lower.

This was the dining-room, and men and women were bustling about setting the tables, for supper would soon be ready, and after that the evening meetings would soon start up.

"Good-evenin', young ge'men," said a buxom negress with a flaming turban, who seemed to be the boss of the place. "Was yo' gwine to sing fo' de col'd folks to-night?"

"Certainly, aunty," replied the twins.

"Dat's right, honeys, dat's right. Guess we kin hab as good singin' as dey do in de white folks' chu'ch, an' yo' is two angels, yo' is, an' ef yo'll sit down at dis little table wif de deakins an' de prechahs, I guess yo' won't starbe to deff. Specs yo' isn't too good to eat wif col'd folks?"

"Oh, not a bit," answered the boys, who believed in conforming to the habits of the people among whom they found themselves.

"Dat am right, chillen, an' yo'll git de bes' dere is, fo' if yo' am gwine to sing yo' mus' be taken car' ob."

In a few minutes somebody rang a huge bell, and then a crowd of orderly but giggling darkies entered the tent and took seats at the tables.

Waiters hurried to and fro, and supplied the guests with hot biscuits, hot coffee, hot corn and sweet potatoes, fried ham and eggs, stewed tomatoes, and cold meat, the quantity of edibles exceeding even the appetites of the guests, and Clem was not the only big eater present.

The business of eating was attended to strictly, and conversation flagged for the nonce, so that the clatter of knives and forks and the rattle of dishes were the only sounds to be heard.

Supper being over, the guests scattered right and left, and here and there among the trees impromptu meetings were being held, snatches of song and praise being wafted on the breeze from a dozen different points.

The speakers' stand was lighted up by lanterns, and the rays of the full harvest moon filtered down through the trees upon the quaint scene.

Sitting on rough benches, made of boards laid on stumps and stakes driven into the ground, were the worshipers, the space in front of the stand gradually filling up as the darkness increased, until all the seats were occupied.

Then all around the edges men and women stood up, while beyond, far enough away not to disturb the meeting, strolled numerous loving couples, billing and cooing in the moonlight.

The boys were given seats on the platform and opened the meeting with one of their favorite hymns, one they had sung a score of times, and to which their voices were well adapted.

The coons were delighted, and wanted another, and when that had been given would have asked for still more, but Parson Broadback arose and said:

"Bruders an' sistahs, it amn't right to tax de voices of dese young ge'men too much, an' dey orter hab a res' fo' a minute, an' so I ax yo' all to jine in de singin' ob 'Climb de Golden Ladder,' ef yo' please."

Then all the congregation started up one of the quaint hymns to be heard nowhere else but in a negro camp:

"We'll chase de debil roun' de stump,

Climbin' up de golden ladder, ladder, ladder.

My golly, won't we make him hump,

Climbin' up de golden ladder, ladder, ladder.

We'll twis' his tail an' dibe him away,

Till he won't wanter come anoder day,

And den at de break ob de golden day

We'll climb de golden ladder, ladder,

Yas, we'll climb de golden ladder."

There were a dozen or more verses to this quaint song, and the darkies sang them with a will, their voices rising higher at each refrain, while the more

excited ones would rock to and fro, and even roll over on the ground, various ejaculations of praise being heard at frequent intervals.

After this came red hot discourses, bits of experiences, short prayers, more singing, and no end of shouting, groaning and excitement.

"It's no wonder these coons have to brace up with a big supper before they begia," laughed Timmy.

"Not a bit, for if they didn't they'd be all used up in an hour."

The boys had slipped off the platform and were now strolling along the outside of the camp.

Suddenly Timmy caught Jimmy's arm, pointed ahead, and whispered:

"There go 'Clem and Yum."

"Yes, and with two colored girls."

"That big mope can't be easy if he isn't making love."

"Let's put up a job on him; that's what we can here for."

"Just the time for it, too."

Clem and Yum had hooked on to a couple of fine-looking colored girls, and were now promenading through the woods by moonlight.

Each gallant swain had his arm around the waist of his daisy, and was sighing like a steam engine in distress.

"Get on to the black and yellow Romeos," whispered Timmy.

Then the boys hurried away and informed Mr. Peter Bullwagon, Mr. Rafe Johnson, Mr. Simon Hardtack, Mr. Scipio White, and several more of what was going on.

The news followed, and several indignant colored gentlemen wanted to produce razors for the crowd at once.

"Leave the whole business to us," said Timmy.

"We'll fix it up to the queen's notion, you bet," coincided Jimmy.

Then the male darkies to the number of a score hurried off through the woods in the lead of the quiet twins.

Presently they came to an opening where the moon had full swing.

Here they paused and gazed through the trees and bushes.

There, in the open space, with the moon shining full upon them, were Clem, Yum and two gorgeously-arrayed colored girls.

"Lubly Clara," cried Clem, putting his arm around the waist of his companion, "won't yo' skip wif me by de light ob de moon?"

Yum twined his arm around the striped jersey of his spoon, and chuckled:

"Lallee gal belly nice. Yum lub she belly much."

"De stars amn't so bright as yo' eyes," gushed Clem.

"Moon lun alay when lallee gal lookin'," warbled Yum.

"Yo' teef am whitah dan de milk in de bucket."

"Lallee gal gottee lippee sleet as shugee."

"I lubs yo' mo' dan I could tol' yo' ef I war to talk till mo'nin'."

"Suppose him chinnee allee night, Yum no can tell how him lub lallee gal."

"Won't yo' be mine, lubly Clara, an' leabe dat no 'count coachman?"

"Lallee gal hab Yum, him washee-washee allee day fo' she."

"Oh, boys, you am too lovin'," sighed the girls.

And all the while, right behind the sighing lovers could be seen a row of darky heads, while a score of pairs of shiny eyes took in the whole scene.

Then Clem knelt on the ground and seized his darling's hand, Yum imitating the action.

"Won't yo' be mine, fo' all de time?"

"Yum likee lallee gal allee time fo' hisself."

Then arose a chorus of voices from the thicket.

"Oh, come off, and give us a vacation."

Clem sprang to his feet in consternation.

Yum hopped up like a bull-frog with the rheumatism.

"Fo' de land sakes, we am discovered."

"Niggie man catchee on whole business, heap big tubble comin'."

And so there was!

## CHAPTER XXVII.

CLEM BROWN and Yum Bung had been discovered in the midst of their love-making.

From his knees Yum jumped up and tried to run away.

He was collared before he had gone half a dozen paces.

"Make lub to my gal, yo' yallah-faced headen!" cried a big darky. "I wouldn't stan' dat f'om a col'd man; but f'om a Chinee it am deff!"

Clem had also been seized, though he made a good deal more of a fuss about it than Yum did.

He laid about him in a lively style, and before he was overpowered by force of numbers had sent more than one of his opponents to grass.

Then he and Yum were tied to a couple of trees on the edge of the wood, facing each other.

They were tied so securely that there seemed to be no chance of their getting away.

"Dat wha' yo' git fo' makin' lub to my gal, my own gal, too, an' my wife," said the coachman with whom the lively Clara had run away.

"I don't talk wif no 'count coons," sniffed Clem.

"Yo' jes tie me loose fo' a secon' an' I wipe up de groun' wif yo'."

"No, sah, yo' don't wipe up de groun' wif nuffin'. Yo' stays yer all night, an' ef de wolves an' de b'ars leaves anyting ob yous by mo'nin' yo'll be a lucky niggah, I tol' yo'."



"Dere amn't no b'ars in dese yer woods, chile," snorted Clem.

"Neber yo' min', son. Yo' ain't neber stayed all night in um. Yo' fin' out ef dere is or not afo' day-break."

"Orter be 'shamed ob hisself," spoke up Mr. Bullwagon, "all de time makin' lub to de gals, a great big ugly niggah like him."

"Does yo' 'membah de time I sen' yo' 'cross country tied to ol' Whitey's tail, Petey?" asked Clem.

"Don' 'membah no sech circumstance 'tall."

"Wall, I does, Petey, an' de nex' time I catches yo' I serbes yo' wuss'n dat, so don' yo' disremembah it."

"H'm! talk am cheap, Clem Brown. Yo's got ter catch yer 'possum fo' yo' cook him, an' yo' ain't got me yit, niggah!"

"Jes' wait till I do, dat's all."

"Bah!" and all the coons began to groan.

"What niggah man do, so be?" asked Yum, all in a tremble.

"Wha' we do?" laughed Zachariah Oldbones. "We leabe yo' heah till mo'nin', an' den, ef anyfing am lef' ob yo', we hang yo' up to de tree."

"Yah!" cried all the mokes.

"Dere ain' no limb strong enuff ter hang dis niggah," sneered Clem.

"Dat make no diff'rence," chuckled Rafe Tompkins. "We built a fiah roun' youse an' try out de fat."

"H'm!" grunted all the brethren.

"Yum be belly good, niggah man lettee go, so be," wailed the Chinaman, shaking as much as the cords would let him.

"No, sah; de Chinyman mus' go," declared Brother Simon Hardbake in blood-curdling tones.

"So dey mus'," answered the chorus.

Then the colored congregation melted away, leaving the two victims facing each other, and in anything but an agreeable frame of mind.

"Clemmy no gettee loose?" asked Yum, after a pause.

"No, sah, it am no use."

"Why Clemmy no lun alay when niggah man tly catchee?"

"Wha' fo' don' yo' do dat yo'se'f?"

"No can. Niggah man catchee?"

"Dat am de case wif me."

For some time the two unfortunates stood facing each other, tied securely to their respective trees, while darker and more dreary grew the night.

Then an awful moan was heard just behind them.

"Wha' dat, fo' de lan' sakes?" cried Clem, his teeth chattering and his wool beginning to straighten out.

The sound was repeated at different points, and then suddenly a dozen white forms suddenly glided out from among the trees and began to circle around the two victims.

Around and around they glided, waving their arms and groaning or shrieking in the most unearthly manner.

"G'way, ghosteses! g'way an' leabe a po' col'd man be," cried Clem. "I habn't done nuffin'."

"Yum no likee ghos', no likee spook; lun alay," chattered the Chinaman, shaking in his shoes.

But the ghosts kept up their howling, drawing all the time nearer to the captives.

"G'way!" yelled Clem, as their robes brushed against him.

"Gettee lout!" howled Yum, quivering with fright.

But this time the ghosts pulled the hair and pinched the flesh of their victims, accompanying this treatment with the most terrific howls.

When they had all gone around once, and were about to start the fun again, a rooster was heard to crow in the distance.

This sound gave the Chinaman new hope.

"Shoo, ghos'," he chattered. "Loostee clow, no can stay; gettee lout."

Sure enough the ghosts all vanished in a twinkling, but with such a howl that Clem's wool stood up straight.

"Bress de Lawd, dem spooks hab gone at las'!" he ejaculated. "Don' coteh dis niggah out aftah dahk no mo', no, sah."

"Yum no 'fraid spooke, so be can lun," stammered Yum. "Tie uppee tlee, thlen no likee."

"Fo' de land sakes, ef I could pull up dis tree I took him home wif me afo' I stay heah any mo'."

"No can do, hap; tlee too muchee big, tie down to ground."

"Dat am de las' ob de spooks, anyhow, an' we don' be boddered no mo'."

That was all that Clem knew about the cozy little picnic that had been set going for his benefit.

Suddenly the barking of a dog was heard right behind him.

Clem tried to jump, but only made the ropes cut deeper into his flesh.

"G'way, I done stole no chickens," he yelled.

"Wha' fo' yo' set de dogs on me?"

Then dogs began barking all about, though if Clem had not been so badly frightened he would have known that no dog's throat ever emitted the sound.

But he was frightened, and it was no slouch of a fright, either, and so he didn't know the difference.

"Here, doggee, doggee, comee gettee piecee meat," warbled Yum, all broken up, and yet thinking to coax the canine disturbers of his peace into good nature.

But the dogs kept on howling, and every instant those two poor wretches expected they were going to spring out from the bushes and tear them in pieces.

"De nex' time I see sasseagers I jes' wish dat all de dogs was sarbed de same way," groaned Clem, who seemed to have turned a dull gray in place of his usual shiny black.

Suddenly the barking stopped as mysteriously as it had begun, leaving Clem and Yum shaking with fear, however, lest something worse should come next.

"Dem dratted dogs make so much noise I kean't heah m'se'f breafe," muttered Clem. "Hope dey won'—"

Suddenly a terrific growl was heard just behind where Clem was standing.

"Gorry! Wha' dat, fo' goodness' sake?" cried the terrified coon, tugging at his bonds.

The growl was repeated, and now it seemed as if all sorts of wild animals had broken loose and were ready to spring upon him.

Bears, lions, hyenas and wolves were heard growling, barking and snapping, and the woods seemed literally full of them.

"Fo' Gawge. I'se eaten up a'ready," groaned Clem.

The sweat was pouring off him in rivers, and he trembled like a man with a first-class shake.

If he had not been tied up he would have fallen down, and he could hardly stand as it was.

"Take Clemmy fuss—him fat—Yum no good fo' eatee," groaned the Chinaman. "Please, goodee bear, no bitee Yum."

"Spec I am fat. I don' wante be chawed up, elder fast or las'," stammered Clem. "G'way dar, you b'ars an' wolves. Cold meat am no good fo' youse."

But the growls and barks went on uninterruptedly, and every now and then something would rush out and grab one or the other by the leg or arm, and give them a pinch.

On such occasions Clem would yell and Yum would howl as though they thought the world were going to pieces right away.

This sort of business was kept up till Clem was as weak as a rag, and Yum could hardly hold himself together.

"Ef I spec dat Petey Bullwagon set dem wil' beasts on me I punch him head de firs'—wow!"

The threat suddenly ended in a howl, for something had grabbed him by the calf of the leg and given him a punch which made him writhe.

"G'way dar!" he yelled, trying to kick. "Specs I wan' de hyderphoby? No, sah!"

Just then Yum gave a shriek, for he had been similarly visited, and imagined that he was to be swallowed alive by some huge dragon.

Then the howlings and snappings suddenly changed to demoniac laughter which gave Clem the shivers, and a cold chill ran all up and down his back.

"Wow! dat freeze de mar'r in um bones," he muttered, with chattering teeth. "Spec I be dead ef I eber get out'n heah alibe."

"Man laugh, Yum cry, no likee, so be," muttered Yum shaking like a barn in a cyclone. "Me hopee die, eber comee dtsee place aglain."

The laughing ceased, after a few minutes, as quickly as it had begun, and all was still.

Silence reigned for a long time, as Clem was too much scared to say a word, and Yum considered it more discreet to hold his tongue.

After awhile a lot of Katydids began fiddling up in the trees, and the sound greatly interested as well as frightened Yum Bung.

"What be, no 'stand whatee dat?" he asked. "Lillee fellie up in tree say: 'Clemmy did, Clemmy didee, Clemmy did so.' What Clemmy do?"

"Don' do nuffin', chile. Dey ain' talkin' 'bout me 'tall."

"Yeppee, lillee fellie say, 'Clemmy did, Clemmy didee.' How be?"

"Shut yo' mouf, yo' headen, an' I listen. Sho! Dat am nuffin'. Dat am only de Katydids a-singin'. Dey don' hurt nobody."

"Yum no likee. Killiee um, so be catchee."

"Yo' won' kill nuffin. Yo' amn't able to kill a skeeter, an' nudder am dis chile. I was jes' as weak as a kitten cat. Dem wolves an' t'ings scar de brea'f out'n me."

"Comee aglain, so be. Makee noise likee evylsling?"

"Donno, an' don' car'. Habn't got no mo' strent' dan a mouse."

With the exception of the noise of the Katydids and other nocturnal insects, there was not a sound to be heard.

Hour after hour those two frightened fellows hugged those trees, scarcely daring to move and only speaking at long intervals.

They did not know at what time the ghosts or the dogs or the wild beasts might return and make an end of them.

At last all sounds ceased, and then the first faint glow of the coming day was seen in the east.

Yum had been squirming and twisting and writhing for half an hour previous to this, and he now shouted:

"Yum gettee loose, bleakee lope, get alay fion tlee."

"Wha' dat?" cried Clem. "Yo' tie yo'se'f loose? How yo' do dat?"

"Yum gettee lillee fellah, gettee so muchee flightened. Yum shink up, allee same kiddee, gettee lout."

Whether the constant strain on the ropes had loosened them or not was not certain, but it was that Yum had worked his hands free and was now busy untying the knots that secured him.

"Yum bully bloy, glassee eye, likee stuftee outee niggah man," he chuckled. "Hi, ya! me allee same good fellah; me no 'fraid ob debil, so be."

"Stop o' dat noise an' tie me loose," growled Clem. "S'pose yo' am de on'y fellah in de worl'? Do mo' wo'k am make less noise 'bout it."

"Clemmy go blazee; niggah man no good allee time," sneered Yum, rapidly releasing the cords from about him.

When he had thrown them all off he stretched himself, and then began to dance and cut up all sorts of monkey shines.

"Hi-ya! Yum belly nicee bloy, 'no care fo' niggah man; him lick Clemmy. No gettee in tubble again."

"Wha' fo' yo' leabe me tied up to de tree when yo'

is loose, yo' yaller riggah?" demanded Clem, indignantly.

"Clemmy gettee Yum in tubble; Yum likee—puttee tin loof on him eye."

Then that hilarious Chinaman picked up a big end of rope and advanced on Clem as though intending to give that big ducky a regular basting.

"How I git yous in tubble, like ter know?" demanded Clem, looking with anything but pleasure on these preparations.

"Takee to meetin', spillie in watee, go lout along o' niggah gal, gettee lickin', all onee 'count o' Clemmy. Now Clemmy gettee likee, so be."

"Yo' bettah not," growled Clem. "Ef yo' touch me I broke yo' yallah jaw fo' youse, I tol' yo'."

"How do? Yum likee see; no can. How Clemmy likee dis?"

Then Yum brought the rope's end down on Clem's rear, laughing to see him jump and squirm.

"No can do?" he asked, with a grin. "No can likee. 'fraid o' Clemmy, bleak him jaw, so be? Whatee callee lis?"

This was a stinger on the calves of the legs, and Clem jumped.

"Stop o' dat, I tol' yer," he yelled. "How much ob dat yo' do ef I warn't tied fas', I'd like to know, h'm?"

But Yum thought it too much fun to get even with some one for his long night of mental agony to stop all at once.

He therefore continued to lash the unfortunate ducky on all sides, at the same time laughing and chuckling like a sick monkey.

"Dat am very funny fo' youse, but jes' you wait till I catch you once."

"Clemmy no can, Yum leabe niggah man on tlee."

Thereupon, having tired of chastising poor Clem, Yum threw down the rope and walked off with all the independence of a boss plumber.

"Hey, dere, comee back!" shouted Clem, who was sore in every limb.

But Yum would not hearken to the voice of his friend, and hied him away to the edge of the wood.

Then he happened to think that he did not know the way back to the farm, and that only Clem could show them.

Deliberating awhile, he returned to Clem and said:

"Clemmy be good, Yum lettee go?"

"I smash yo' jaw, dat wha' I do."

"Dlen Yum go alay, leave Clemmy tie up to tlee allee day, allee night."

Off he started again, but Clem, knowing that the camp-meeting had broken up, and that there was no chance of any one coming along that way, yelled out:

"Comee back heah an' untie dese yer ropes dis minute."

"Clemmy no punchee jaw, so be?"

"Am yo' gwine to let me loose?"

"Clemmy promise no touchee Yum?"

"Won' do it," snapped Clem, unwilling to forego his revenge.

"All lile, Clemmy stay allee day, allee night. Catcher ghos', catcher bow-wow, gettee flightened likee blazie."

Clem shouted and yelled, but Yum kept straight on till he was out of sight.

He stayed away for a good ten minutes, and then came back, finding Clem shaking like a leaf and sweating like an ox.

"Am yo' comee back to lemme go?" the coon asked, humbly.

"Clemmy no likee?"

"Won' tech yo'?"

"No punchee head?"

"No, sah."

"No bleakee jaw?"

"Pon my honah."

"Clemmy cally Yum on him back, so be gettee blokee up?"

"Yas'r, sah, I tote yo' all de way hum."

"Gettee glub fo' Yum, him gettee hungly?"

"I gets yo' ebrtying yo' want."

"No likee, no punchee, no smashee jaw?"

"I war on'y foolhn', ehile, an' I wouldn' hurt yo' fo' nuffin'."

"Den Yum lettee go."

In a few minutes Yum had released Clem, who, had he wanted to, could have done nothing, being so stiff in the joints that he could scarcely walk.

He managed to get limbered up after a while, but did not offer any indignity to his former pal.

Yum was wary enough to keep a few paces behind, however, and Clem led the way in silence.

Reaching the lake, they walked along its shores for fully two miles before either spoke a word.

"Yum hungly, Clemmy gettee some glub fo' eatee," remarked the Celestial.

"Can't yer wait till I gits somewheres, yo' headen? Dere amn't no house dis a way. Jes' yo' wait."

On and on they trudged until Yum, tired and hungry, could scarcely drag one foot after the other.

"Yum Bung allee bloke up, Clemmy cally on ee back," he muttered.

"Gib us yo' foot an' I lif' yo' up," returned Clem, in sulky tones.

Yum put up his foot and Clem hoisted him on his back, where he held on as well as he could.

Then Clem started off with the Chinaman on his back, as patiently as a mule.

He did not say much, but, like the owl, he kept up a heap of thinking.

Presently the road turned off after sweeping around quite close to the lake.

Yum was getting so well rested by his new mode of travel that he forgot all his former caution.

He even wanted Clem to go faster and gave him a kick in the ribs to expedite his movements.

Clem had been waiting for a good chance to get square on that heathen Chinese.



The opportunity was now within his grasp. Turning short about, he ran straight across the road toward the lake.

Then, with a sudden movement, he dropped on his knees, ducked in his head, and sent Yum Bung flying through space.

Then he straightened up and let out a laugh, just as the Chinaman plumped into the water like a stone.

"Gorrymighty! how him go undah!" he roared. "Spec dat pay him up fo' de lashin' he gib me wif de rope."

Presently Yum came to the surface, gasping and spluttering, and struck for shore.

"Don' ye' come dis way," cried Clem, as he neared the bank. "Don' yo' dare ter."

At the same time he enforced his command by throwing stones at Yum and spattering him with water.

"Lettee out, Yum gettee dlownd," pleaded the Chinaman.

"Don' car' ef yo' do," laughed Clem. "Dere ain' no use fo' Chinamans anyhow. G'way fom yer, honey, or I frow big stone on you'se."

There was a big bowlder on the bank, and this Clem pushed toward the edge, threatening to throw it in if Yum persisted in trying to land.

"Go odee place. Dis place no good," said Yum. "Clemmy heap big fool. No can keepee in ee watee."

So he swam further along, but Clem kept up the same tactics as before, and kept the shivering heathen from landing.

At last Yum determined to adopt a new plan. He would dive, swim under water, and come up at some unexpected spot.

He accordingly dove as deep as possible, and Clem was greatly puzzled to know where he would come up.

That time, however, Yum only enched himself.

He became confused, lost his bearings, and finally came up further from the shore than when he went down.

"How be, no can sabe?" he muttered, looking around him.

"Dat's 'case yo' amn't no good," retorted Clem, with a curl of his big lip. "Wha' yo' 'spose Chinyman's good fo', anyhow?"

This time Yum was bound to fetch it and cheat Clem.

He took a deep breath, dove nearly to the bottom, and began swimming toward the bank.

Just then, however, Clem saw something that interested him more than the Chinaman.

It was a big farmer's wagon coming along the road and bound in the very direction he was going.

"Let dat ol' fool Chinyman do all de swimmin' him want," he grinned. "I'se gwine hum, an' don' yo' fo'git it."

Then he made a break for the road, which he had left in his endeavors to keep Yum in the water.

He reached it just as the wagon came rattling by.

"Gib us a lif, boss?" he shouted.

"Hop in, blacky, and make yerself to hum," cried the farmer.

It was no easy matter for a big fellow like Clem to get into a wagon going as fast as that was, and after running a hundred feet or more, and making several unsuccessful attempts, he shouted to the fellow to hold up a little.

This the man did, laughing at Clem's frantic efforts, and that laughing moke climbed up by the wheel and tumbled into the wagon on top of a pile of straw and among a lot of farm truck.

The farmer drove on, and Clem, looking back along the road, saw Yum standing on the bank, all dripping, and looking everywhere for his late companion.

"Done got eben wif yo' dis time," laughed Clem to himself. "Guess de nex' time yo' go out yo' won' try to play roots on Clem Brown, no sah."

#### CHAPTER XXVIII.

CLEM reached home after his trip to the camp-meeting just before breakfast.

He had a wash and put on his working clothes and got in with the rest of the help in time to tackle his hash.

"Where's Yum?" asked the others.

"How I know?" snorted Clem. "Hahn't seen him since las' night."

"Didn't he go to the camp with you?"

"Specs he did."

"Well, he ain't home yet."

"Kean't help dat, chillen. Ef he wanter stay out all night, dat am no fault ob mine. Specs he ain't got up yet."

"Begorry, he hasn't been in at all, an' no more haven't ye," said Pat.

"G'way, Irish. Youse don' know wha' yo' talkin' 'bout. I'se been in all night."

"Faix, yer bed isn't teched."

"Made up de bed m'self, dis mo'nin', to sabe wo'k fo' de gals," retorted Clem, diving into his food with the appetite of a horse.

"Too thin," laughed Pat.

"What am too thin? Dis yer mush? Yas'r, I fink so m'self. Dere am too much watah an' not enough meal in um."

"No, not the mush, but your story."

"Neber tol' a 'tory in my life. I fink tol' de trufe."

"Yis, when yez couldn't help it."

"Don' talk to me; I'se no use fo' Irishers. Dey am no good, 'cept to clean de roads."

"Faith, I'd loike to clane the street wid ye, me bucko."

"Yas'r, but likin' to do a ting an' bein' able to it am difrent," snickered Clem, passing from mush to more solid food.

In fact, Clem was a little too solid for one man to ackle alone, and Pat was well aware of it.

"Faix, I wudn't demane meself be schrappin' wid yez," he sniffed, and then Clem was left alone.

Breakfast was over and preparations for dinner well under way before Yum Bung showed up.

He was a most disreputable-looking object, being covered with dust from head to foot, his shoes broken, his hat banged in, and his clothes shrunk to one-half their usual size.

He had been obliged to walk all the distance from the lake, for, although several wagons had passed him on the road, no one would pick him up.

No teamster would have him as a passenger, he looked so much like a tramp, and so the poor Celestial had been obliged to foot it, and was now all used up.

"Yez are a purty-luckin' haythin to come walkin' into a dacint house," cried Mrs. Roriarity, flourishing a broomstick over his head.

"Ilish ooman no sabe Yum?" he asked, with chattering teeth.

"Faith, I know yez well enough, and ye'll know me if yez don't get out av me clane kitchen an' go an' make yeself luk respectible."

"Yum hungly, no hab anysing fo' eat, allee bloke up."

"Faith, I'll break ye up wid de broom handle if yez don't git out."

"Where Clemmy, so be?"

"Clem was in bed like a respectable man last noight an' was up to breakfast in good sayson, ye yaller naygur, an' yez had ought to be ashamed av yeself for not doing the same."

"Clemmy go beddee las' night?" asked the puzzled Chinaman.

"Yis."

"Gettee in to bleakfast."

"Yis, I tell yez. Why wouldn't he if he war in all night?"

"Big lie," grunted Yum.

"Phat's that?"

"Clemmy no come home allee night, no go beddee, no gettee bleakfast, all heap big lie, so be."

That was too much for the gentle, angelic Roriarity to endure.

Before she opened her mouth to express her indignation she proceeded to sweep the Chinese from her path.

A broom is meant to sweep with, and Mrs. Roriarity's besom did excellent work in that line.

Almost before Yum was aware he received a clout over the head with it.

Down he went like a house of cards, flat on the floor.

Then he got it on the back, feet and stomach all at once.

Till that time the housekeeper had said nothing, but now she made amends for her silence.

"It's a big loi, is it?" she gasped. "Begob, no haythin shall say that to me. Get out av this, ye murderin' blayguard, an' don't come in again till yez knows how to spake respectably to yez betthers."

Then Roriarity insinuated the broom under the base of Yum's spine and swept him out of the room, banging the door savagely when she had gotten him outside.

Poor Yum picked himself up, shook off some of the dust, and gazed sadly around him.

"How be?" he muttered. "Ilish ooman dlunk—clazy, hap. Gettee sclare on Clemmy; punchee him head, so be."

Then he re-entered the house without going through the kitchen, sought his room, cleaned himself up and came down some time later looking as fresh as a China daisy.

The first persons he met were the twins, on the lookout for fun.

"Hello, Yum! Up all night, eh?"

"Clem got you into trouble again, did he?"

"You want to keep away from that smiling moke."

"His company is too rich for your blood."

"Too much style there for you."

"Clemmy no good. Yum gettee even somee day."

"So you want to get square on him?"

"Yeppee; Yum likee smashee him jaw."

"We'll help you to get revenge."

"We'll push the thing through for you."

"Lillee bloy helpee Yum gettee even?"

"Bet your shoes."

"Count us in, every trip."

Yum was ready enough to get hunk on Clem, but not to believe those innocent young kids.

He drew down the under lid of one eye with his thumb and forefinger.

"See anysing gleen?" he chuckled.

"What's the row now?"

"Don't you believe us?"

"Lillee bloy too muchee likee fun—likee play lacket on Yum."

"Oh, no," they both protested.

"Lillee kid sabe too much, but no catchee Yum dis tlip. Yum no gleenhorn."

"That Mongolian is getting civilized, I do believe," laughed Timmy.

"It looks that way, my boy."

"Lillee bloy no more betta dan Clemmy, allee same lillee debil, likee makee fun with Yum. Tellee get sclare on Clemmy fo' Yum, on'y gettee Yum in tubble again."

"Oh, no!" said Tim, taking a long breath.

"Not for the world," put in Jim, raising his right hand.

"No goodee talkce. Yum sabe lillee bloy allee time," answered Yum. "Gettee sclare on Clemmy hisself, no wantee lillee bloy do nossing."

Then he waddled away with a smile on his saffron mug, and the twins gazed at each other in sadness.

"He's on to us, old chap."

"He's too fly for us, young feller."

"We'll have to work on the quiet."

"Hold secret sessions, with closed doors and no reporters admitted."

"That's the wrinkle."

At dinner-time Yum saw Clem for the first time since the fracas at the lake.

He paid no attention to him, however, which did not suit the jokers at the table at all.

The twins had told them of Yum's desire to get square with Clem, and they wanted to see a fight.

Clem was all right, for the last trick had been his, and it was Yum's turn now.

As for the Chinaman, he was going to wait till Clem was off his guard, which he knew was not the case now.

This peaceful state of affairs did not suit the others by a very big jug full.

"Why don't yez paralyze the big naygur, ye haythin?" asked Pat.

"Walk on his chest," suggested Mr. Joy.

"Swell his head for him," added Mr. Bailey, with a grin.

"Yez have no spirit, be heavens," cried the housekeeper.

"S'pose I let dat no 'count niggah insult me?" sniffed Peggy, the housemaid. "No, sah, I show him dat he'm no good."

"Brain the spalpeen wid a flat-iron," was the brilliant idea of Nora, the waiter-girl.

Then Clem concluded it was about time for him to chime in.

"Am yo' talkin' 'bout me, chillen?" he asked, gulping down about a pint of soup.

"Evlybody chinnee heap much," said Yum. "What all about, so be?"

"Why don't yez make mince poi av the naygur? Ye said yez would."

"You swore you'd use his head for a chopping-block."

"Like to see um do it," laughed Clem. "Ef dat Chinyman eber spoke crooked to me, he hab to make him will bery sudden."

"Clemmy good fellee, Yum makee fiend o' niggiee man," said the Chinaman.

He had no notion of getting into a squabble at that time.

He was wise enough to know that if he did Clem would have the best of it.

So he went on with his dinner, regardless of the jeers of all hands.

Having failed to arouse the Chinaman, Pat and his friends now tried to work Clem into a passion.

"Big niggah like that let a little Chinaman bully him," sneered Peggy.

"Oh, he's afraid, begorry," grunted Pat Malone.

"Yum wud walk away wid him in two seconds."

"Clem never did have any grit in him."

"He's all wind and no fight."

"Lick a little Chinaman? He couldn't lick the molasses off a piece of corn-bread."

"Yah! He's no good!"

All of which had as much effect upon Clem as an iron spoon would have in bailing a sinking ship.

"Talk away, chillen," he laughed. "Wo'ds am cheap as dirt, but de backin' ob dem up comes high."

Yum was bound to get even, and was willing to bide his time if he had to wait a month.

Clem was satisfied with his own ability, and was content to await the attack.

That afternoon he was sent to do some work in the cellar among the wine casks.

When he had finished he began to skirmish around for some liquid refreshment.

Put a mouse in a cheese room and he is sure to satisfy his appetite.

Place a big daky in convenient distance of wine or liquor and the temptation is equally strong.

It was not long before Clem found a cask with a spigot in it, all ready for letting loose the contents.

A brief search revealed the presence of a tin pail which would hold about three quarts.

Clem was not long in making the contents of the cask acquainted with the inside of the pail.

Turning the faucet, he let enough of the wine run out to nearly fill the pail, and then shut off the connection.

Then he coupled on with his big mug and evaporated about a pint before he let up on the suction.

"By golly, dat am firs'-class," he remarked, preparing to take another pull.

Then he remembered where he was and desisted.

"Nebah do to drink dat 'tuff here," he laughed.

"De ol' man cotch me fo' sartin."

Concealing the pail under his coat, he left the cellar and made for the orchard.

Here he tackled the rosy again, and gulped down enough to make it low tide in the pail.

"Dat am de bes' drink I hab had fo' a long time. Beats de whisky in de tabern undah de hill allholer."

After enjoying the after taste for a few minutes, he proceeded to wet his whistle once more.

"'Clar' to glory, dat am fine, so mild an' sweet; nuffin' strong or fiery 'bout dat, I tol' yo'."

It was all right then, but that big moke had no idea of the future result of guzzling that mild wine.

He started off to work, but the call lured him, and he soon returned and took another horn.

"Don' see de use ob wo'kin' myse'f to deff, anyhow," he finally observed, sitting down on the ground.

In short, the wine was beginning to work, even though he had knocked off.

"Wo'k mo' dan any man on de plantation, anyhow, an' don' get neah as much pay."

Another small drink to quiet his feelings, and then a long silence.

"Spec I could pal'yze dat Chinyman ef I wanted ter, but den wha's de use?"



That mild wine was beginning to paralyze him, but he took another swig and set the can down by his side.

"Neber see sech a place fo' makin' a fellah wo'k so hard. Hab a good min' to ax Peggy to get spliced an' settle down. Den I won' hab to wo'k so hard."

Another pull at the bucket to calm his agitated nerves.

"'Twould be funny to scare dat Chinyman an' make him fink de worl' am comin' to a end."

Then a swaying to and fro, a gradual fading away of the senses, and a general limpness from head to foot.

Bump!

Clem's head had come in contact with the ground. It remained there, his limbs extended themselves, and the big moke was fast asleep.

The mild and innocent wine had proved too much for him.

Here he lay like a log, the flies dancing a jig unrepressed on his fat cheeks.

He was good for the rest of the day if left undisturbed.

An hour passed on, but Clem never awoke, nor did he seem likely to do so.

Then, as it chanced, along came the twins on their usual errand.

"Drunk again," said Timmy.

"And glad of it," echoed Jimmy.

"Let's tell Yum."

"So he can get solid."

"That's it."

The twins hurried off, and soon found Yum loafing round looking for something to do.

"You'll find Clem in the orchard," said the boys.

"As drunk as a fool."

"Now's your chance."

"To have fun with him."

"Lillee bloy no teller stoly?"

"We're giving it to you straight."

"As a house."

"Clemmy dlunk in orchard?"

"That's it."

"Me go see."

And he went to see at once, the boys taking the opposite direction.

Sure enough, there lay Clem flat on the ground and snoring like a steam engine.

The half-emptied can by his side told too plain a story to leave any doubt as to how he came there.

"Clemmy big fool, Yum gettee sclare," chuckled our Asiatic friend.

He looked around, took in the surroundings and then waddled off to the house.

Presently he returned, his soul in arms and eager for the fray, as the play-books have it.

He had with him a big wooden bucket and about forty feet of stout rope.

He proceeded at once to cut this into four convenient lengths.

Then he took Clem's right arm, stretched it out nearly to full length and tied the rope about the wrist.

The other end was made fast to a tree five or six feet away.

Clem's left arm was then extended in a similar fashion and likewise made fast.

"All lite, Clemmy no gettee up now," chattered Yum.

Clem had slept through the whole business and had never once moved.

Yum was not done with him, however, by a good deal.

He now tackled Clem's right-hand stone-crusher and fastened the rope tightly around the ankle.

If Clem had once awakened, how that big foot of his would have tickled the Chinaman's ribs.

But he did not awake, and Yum had the field to himself.

Clem's legs were served as his arms had been, the ropes being made fast to trees.

There was that laughing moke flat on the ground, and without the power of getting up.

"Clemmy dlunk, me makee sober," remarked Yum, surveying his work.

This was the place now for the old oaken bucket to come in and do the funny business.

When Yum had given that sly glance around, after spotting Clem, he had seen something.

Said something was a barrel put in the ground up to its neck and filled with water.

There was a spring at the bottom, and the barrel, like an old toper, was always full.

It was a convenience to have it there, and that's why it was there.

Yum caught right on to the convenience, and worked it for its full market value.

"Makee Clemmy flesh likee lose, ilkee flowee of spring," he remarked.

Then he took up the bucket, filled it at the spring and let Clem have a dose right in the face.

The shower awoke but did not fully sober up the sleeping African.

"Wha' yo' doin' dar, honey?" he inquired.

Then a second bucketful soaked him in the mouth, and made him gasp for breath.

"Fo' goodness sake, am it rainin' as hard as dat?"

A third inundation assured him that something was the matter.

He was half-way sober now and tried to get on his feet and investigate matters.

The ropes had something to say about that and held him down.

Then the flood came again, and no sooner did he recover his breath than he got another ducking.

"Who frow watah obah me?" he inquired, pretty nearly sober, raising his head and looking around.

"How Clemmy likee dis?" and now he was splashed from head to foot with cold spring water.

"Dat you, Mistah Yum? What yo' doin'?"

"Habe lillee fun long o' Clemmy. How likee dat?"

Then that heathen Chinese gave Clem another soaking.

The poor coon was wet all over, Yum having distributed his favors equally.

"Stop o' dat, yo' headen. Ef I get up I smash yo' jaw."

"Clemmy dlunk, old man catchee, Clemmy gettee bounce, so be. Yum makee sober."

"Don' yo' do—" but a flood of water choked his utterance.

Yum laughed and chattered, and hopped about like a monkey, drawing water and slashing it over Clem as fast as he could work.

"Bet yo' life I pays yo' up fo' dis," growled Clem.

"Say so? Gettee mo' watee, so be," and Clem got another pailful.

He tugged and pulled at the ropes, but all to no purpose.

If he had hauled all night it would have done him no good.

Neither could he rise or even sit up, the ropes not being slack enough for that.

Yum had now thrown a dozen buckets of water over Clem, and the supply in the barrel was getting low.

Clem was thoroughly sober now, and was as mad as a whole colony of hornets.

"How Clemmy feel?" asked Yum, drawing near.

"Yo' let me up ef yo' don' wanten git killed!"

"Me no 'fraid; Clemmy no can killee skleetee."

"Lemme up, I tol' yo'."

"No, guessee keepee niggee man on ee glound; makee sober."

"Am dat de way yo' treats de bes' friend yo' eber had?"

"Clemmee no good; too muchee chinnee."

"Lemme up, I tol' yo'."

Then he began to pull and tug, in order to loosen the ropes.

It was of no use.

The water had tightened them, if anything, and Clem felt himself being straightened out flatter than ever.

"Lemme up. Don' yo' heah me?" he yelled, angrily.

But Yum only laughed and proceeded to add insult to injury.

He jumped upon Clem's fat stomach and danced a regular jig.

"Get off'n dere!" yelled Clem, raising his head as far as it was possible to raise it and darting an indignant look at the festive Chinaman.

"Yum hab bully time; dance allee day dis way."

Then he hopped and jumped and spun around right on Clem's big body, and seemed to be having no end of a picnic.

"Jes' wait till I cotch yo' alone, my frien'," gasped Clem.

"Ef I don' wallop de fun out ob youse, yo' may call me a white niggah."

"Plenty heap fun, how likee?" answered Yum, dancing away.

So it was, but there might be a reckoning some day.

#### CHAPTER XXIX.

THAT heathen Chinese was having no end of fun dancing on Clem's stomach.

"Hi-ya, belly nicee, heap big lot fun," he chinned, putting in the fancy steps.

"G'off dere, yo' headen," sputtered Clem. "Yo' specs my stummick am a dancin' platfo'm, ow! get off!"

It wasn't easy for him to say even this much, and he groaned and grunted at every word.

"Yum gottee Clemmy where him hair shortee, gottee bulge on Clemmy," laughed Yum.

"Stop o' dat," cried Clem, struggling to rise.

"G'way, I tol' yo'."

Then he tugged with legs and arms trying to free the ropes which the water had tautened until they nearly lifted him from the ground.

"Clemmy no good, lillee bloy lickee," chuckled Yum, dancing away and kicking up his heels.

"Makee good beddee, no good anysing else."

Things were growing a trifle monotonous for Mr. Clem Brown, of South Carolina.

His position, under Chinese rule, was somewhat wearisome.

Therefore he kicked, and for the whole amount of his valuation, personal and real.

Kicking sometimes has a salutary effect.

In this case Clem's muscular contortions, combined with the stretching of the ropes, had a good result.

Snap went one of the cables, that securing his right foot.

The rope had been stretched as far as it would stand, and it protested by parting.

The minute Clem felt his foot loose he pitched it up as high as it would conveniently go.

It took Yum right in the bosom of his loose trousers.

"Hi, ya! Yum gettee kickee!"

"Bet yo' life," snorted Clem, giving his foot another twist and taking Yum in the stomach.

That green Chinaman had turned around to see what the matter was behind.

He discovered the secret in one minute.

Then he felt as though he had been born with no body.

He was doubled up and went flying over backward at full speed.

He just escaped sitting on Clem's head, a fortunate circumstance for the big ducky.

Just then another rope parted, and this time Clem's right arm was released.

Yum got up, saw what had happened, and began to grin.

Clemmy stlikee Yum in um belly, Yum givee more watee, so be."

By this time the barrel had partly filled up, and Yum dipped in his pail.

Getting a good supply he let it fly all over Clem, to pay for the kick in the stomach.

Clem gasped and choked and kicked, and another of the ropes gave out with a loud snap.

That left Clem all right, except his left foot, which was still held fast by the rope.

It did not prevent him from jumping up, however, and running to the end of his line.

He was a bit stiff, to be sure, but he managed to stand pretty well for all that.

Then he went for that Chinaman bald-headed.

Yum was not getting caught that afternoon, however.

He skipped out in lively style, and when Clem reached out to grab him there was nothing to grab.

Our colored friend forgot that he was tethered, and made a spring at the escaping heathen.

He was brought up with a jerk, and went sprawling flat on his stomach.

"Gorry! guess dat knocked de win' out ob me," he muttered, when he caught his breath.

Then he got up, walked to the tree around which the rope was fastened and sat down.

"Jes' wait till I git dis yer rope loose an' I pa'lyze dat Chinyman," he remarked.

When he had tugged away for about ten minutes he had succeeded in getting the rope so loose that it was then an easy matter to free it from the tree.

"Reckon I'se no slouch at tyin' ropes loose," he muttered, in a tone of congratulation.

Having loosened the rope he now got up and sauntered toward the house.

"Guess dat yer Chinyman make hisse'f scarce when he see me comin'," he chuckled.

Suddenly he felt himself yanked up short and turned around to see what had caused it.

"Didn' I take dat rope off?" he inquired. "Reckon I did."

Yes, the tree to which it had been tied was too far away to allow of the rope being still fastened to it.

What the trouble was Clem soon ascertained.

Instead of untying the rope from about his ankle, he had, ducky fashion, released it from the tree.

Consequently, as it dragged behind him, it had become caught between two stones.

"Wall, I neber did," laughed Clem, as he released it. "Wha' fo' I unhitch de tree, 'stead o' my leg? Dat am smart, I declar!"

It was just like him, however, for all the world.

"Reckon I'se a big fool to go draggin' dat yer rope 'long de groun' behin' me. A yaller dog no mo' dan dat!"

Then he sat down on the ground, got to work at the rope about his ankle, and in ten minutes or so was free of it.

"I takes dat yer rope to de house, an' ef I don' wahn dat Chinyman's hide wif um, yo' can call me no good."

However, when he reached the house there was no Yum in sight.

The other servants were, though, and they got the champion laugh on him.

"Phat do yez want av the rope?" inquired Mrs. Roriarity. "To bang yesilf wid? Faix, thin, there's a convenient beam out in the barn, an' it's mesilf that'll help yez to do the business."

"No, begorry, it's not that," said Pat. "He's leading a calf be the rope, and that's himself."

"The rope is the lightest thing he can find to carry," laughed Mr. Joy, "for the chips are all picked up."

"He's the hardest worked man on the farm," added Mr. Bailey. "See how he sweats, his clothes are soaked."

"Sumpin else will get a soakin', I reckon," answered Clem, as he remembered the ducking Yum had given him.

Then he laid about him with the rope, and literally soaked it to every one within reach.

Mr. Joy got it in the ribs, and felt anything but joyful.

Pat Malone got a crack in the back that made him jump back about ten feet.

Mr. Bailey received a dose in the calves of his legs, and he skipped as no calf had ever skipped before.

Two or three others received a share of the rope's end, and concluded to go elsewhere at once.

Even Mrs. Roriarity had a touch of the general complaint, and her indignation was aroused to the boiling point.

"Ye're a low, dirty naygur, to be after shrik'in' a ledy," she remonstrated.

For all that she got out of the way of the flying rope in quick time.

So did everybody else, and Clem soon had the field to himself.

"Gorry! how dem folks scattah!" he laughed. "I clean out de hull crowd as fine as ef de riber run ober dem."

What he would have liked the most, however, was to give Yum Bung a good basting.

Yum probably was well aware of this, for he kept religiously out of that wrathful coon's way.

Clem searched for him all over the place without success.

At last, as supper-time was approaching, he threw away the rope and went in to change his clothes.

"I'se got it in fo' dat Chinyman, an' ef I hab to wait free monfs I pa'lyze him at las'," he muttered.

Nothing was to be seen of Yum at supper, nor all the evening, and when the next day arrived Clem's anger had nearly all departed.

"Aftah all, he on'y get square fo' what I do to him," he laughed, as he thought over the matter.



Consequently, when he saw Yum at breakfast, he only chuckled and said:

"It am lucky fo' yo', Mistah Yum, dat I didn't see yo' last ebenin', kase I had it in fo' yo' bad."

"Clemmy pullee tlee down, makee plenty heap fun," laughed Yum.

"Dat am all right now, I tol' yo', but ef I cotched ye las' night it wouldn'ter been, my frien'."

"Faix, the Chinases is better than ye, anny time," sneered Mrs. Roriarity, elevating her snub nose.

"No, he isn't," snapped Peggy the house-maid, indignantly.

She might laugh at Clem herself, but she would not let any one else do it.

"Faix, I say he is, a Chinaser is better than a naygur anny toime."

"Col'd folks is more high-toned than Irishmans, anyhow," sniffed Peggy.

"Ob co'se dey is," laughed Clem. "Yo' am kerect, Miss Peggy, an' I allus said you had mo' sense dan any gal I knowed."

"Give me the Chinaser ivery toime," snorted Roriarity.

"Would yez marry wan?" asked Pat.

"Begorry, I'd not marry ye, Pat Malone, if ye wur smothered wid di'monds."

"I'm not axin' ye, Mrs. Roriarity, ma'am, an' as it's not lape year, ye have no chance to ax me fust."

Mr. Malone was getting his back up as well as other people.

"No, an' I'll not ax ye, alther, Mr. Malone, sor'" snorted the housekeeper, with a toss of her head.

"Ye'll not get me, or anny wan half as good, me leddy."

"Faix, the Chinaser wud blush to have ye call yesilf his aquil."

"Bedad, if ye're so fond av him, ye'd better marry him."

"I'd rather do it than have ye, me bog throtther."

"You mally me?" piped up Yum. "Me lubbee you belly much, me settie up washee house, makee lich in tlee year, hab bully time."

"Ah, wud yez listen to the mon?" laughed Mrs. Roriarity, laughing and blushing together.

"Me lubbee Missee Lollality belly much, me likee mally, makee plenty heap dollee, allee same lich Melican man," continued Yum.

"Luk at that now, here's an offer for ye," laughed the housekeeper.

"Whatee say, you mally me?" persisted Yum, who meant business, and did not care who knew it.

"I'll tell yez to-morrow," giggled the housekeeper as she beat a retreat to the kitchen.

"All light, Yum axee aglain," replied the heathen, smiling like a basket of chips.

Clem did not make quite so public a declaration of his intentions, but he did find time, during the day, to see Peggy alone and to unbosom himself.

"Wha' yo' say," he laughed, "ef I ax yo' to get spliced?" he said.

"Lor' sakes, Mistah Brown, what yo' mean by dat?"

"Go to de pahson an' git hitched. Don' yo' undahstan'?"

"Does yo' mean to git married, Mistah Brown?"

"Dat am de time yo' hit de bull's-eye, Miss Peggy. Yo' knows I hab allus lubbed yo', don' yo', now?"

Peggy giggled and blushed, and giggled again, but finally said:

"How 'bout Clara Jefson, Mistah Brown? Didn' yo' tol' her yo' lubbed her too?"

"Neber did!" protested Clem; "an', 'sides dat, she am married to de coachman."

"Didn' yo' step on Samantha Buckwheat's foot goin' ober to de camp meetin'?"

"Specs I did, but dat's 'kase it war so big an' I couldn' help it."

"Didn' yo' nseter go to see Phebe Jackson, down to de willage?"

"Wha' yo' talkin' 'bout?" laughed Clem. "S'pose I mean business wif dat gal? She habn't got no style. I on'y was polite to her to pass de time, dat all."

"Well, Mistah Brown, yo' get a hund'ed dollahs an' I marry yo'."

"Hope to die ef you don't?"

"Yes."

"Am dat a bargain?"

"Fo' shuah."

"Den I goes right away an' knock down de fus' man I see an' gets de money, fo' I means to hab yo' if I die fo' it."

"Oh, Mistah Brown!"

"Yas'r, dat's what I mean. Gib yo' deah Clemmy a kiss."

The sound that followed resembled the banging of a window shutter against a house.

There was no nonsense about Clem, and when he kissed any one he put all his soul into it.

At the same time Peggy fetched him a slap on the jaw that would have given a mule the toothache.

"Don' yo' do dat agin!" he cried, as Peggy ran off.

Just then who should appear but those quiet twins.

"Oh, Clem, aren't you ashamed?"

"Kissing the girls, oh, Clem!"

"Did yo' sawn me do dat, chillen?" laughed the moke.

"Why, of course."

"Well, dat am all right."

"What'll her other fellow say?"

"She don' bab no odah fellah but me, I tol' you'se."

"Is that so?"

"It am fo' a sack an' we'se gwine to be married."

"When you get a hundred dollars," laughed Timmy.

"How vo' know dat?"

"Heard the dicky birds say so," grinned that twin.

"Dat am al' right, chillun," and Clem walked off with al' the airs of a man to whom a hundred dollars is a mere flea bite.

That afternoon Mr. Nettlebone sent Clem over to a neighbor's for something, and Yum went along, by way of company.

They took a short cut over the hills and across fields instead of going by the road.

Their route led them across the railroad track, and Clem proposed that they try walking on the rails.

"What's de hurry?" he asked. "We'se got time 'nuff."

"Yum walkee on lail load belly nicee," chirped the Chinaman, waddling along on the top of a rail.

His shoes were pliant, and he could curl his toes so as to hold on first-rate.

"Reckon I beat yo'," muttered Clem, taking the opposite rail.

He fell off every three or four steps, but at last he got the hang of it and sailed along in fine style, keeping his eye on Yum Bung.

"Tlain a comin'," said Yum, presently, being about twenty feet in advance.

In fact, the whistle was heard at that moment, about a mile away.

"Don' car' if it am," muttered Clem, balancing himself for a moment and then tramping on.

Presently, however, his foot slipped, he wavered, flourished his arms, and then sat down heavily right between the rails.

"Golly! wha' do dat?" he muttered.

Then his eyes rested on the rail upon which he had been walking.

There was a bad break in it, and that was what had caused his fall.

"Fo' de lan' sakes, dat am bad," he muttered.

"Hey dere, yo' headen, come back yer."

"Whatee want?" asked Yum.

"Come back yer, dis minnit, I tol' yo'. De rail am busted and de train will be frowed fom de track 'less we tol' somebody."

"Whatee mattee?" asked Yum, coming back.

"Don' yo' see what am de mattah?" and Clem pointed to the broken rail.

"Lailload allee bloke up. Tlain go down ee ditch?"

"Dat am de talk."

"Me likee see," smiled Yum.

"Yo' would?" cried Clem, indignantly. "Well, den, I wouldn't! Come 'long! ef dat train am busted up we gets hung fo' it, an' dat am no fun."

Just then the whistle of the approaching train was heard again.

"Dere am no time to lose," muttered Clem, racing up the track as fast as his fat legs would let him.

As he ran he pulled off his coat, and presently, coming around a curve, he saw the train approaching.

Standing in the middle of the track, he waved his coat and yelled with all his might:

"Stop de train! Stop de bullgine, I tol' yo'—stop right yer! De rail am busted!"

Yum had reached him by this time, being lively on his pegs, and he too piped up:

"Stoppee tlain, stoppee light here, lail allee bloke lup, stoppee!"

Then both of them yelled for all their value, waving their hands and making all sorts of frantic motions.

The engineer saw them and caught a word or so of what they said.

Clem jumped aside and yanked Yum after him just in time to keep from being run over, and then, as the engine dashed by, yelled with all his lung power:

"Stop dat train, I tol' yo'! De rail am broken!"

The engineer knew that something was up and clapped on the brakes.

The train was brought to a standstill not fifty feet from the broken rail.

The engineer jumped out, followed by the conductor and some passengers, and the break was soon discovered.

"How did you know about it?" asked somebody.

"A big nigger and a little Chinaman gave the alarm. I thought something was up by the way they acted."

Just then Clem came up puffing like a porpoise, his coat slung across his arm.

"Didn' I tol' yo' somefin' war de mattah, boss?" he asked, the sweat rolling down his black cheeks.

"Clemmy see lail bloken, run likee blazie, stoppee tlain," panted Yum.

"Lucky for us he did," said the conductor.

So everybody said, and Clem received no end of praise.

"Dat am nuffin'," he said. "Spec I'se gwine to see all dese peoples killed, jis' fo' de want ob a little holerin'?" No, sah. I ain' dat kin' ob a coon."

"You have saved all our lives," said an elderly gentleman standing near, "and I propose to reward you for it. Come, gentlemen, what'll you give?"

Then he took his hat and passed among the passengers, every one giving something.

"Wall, ef dat ain' funny!" laughed Clem, "to see a fine, white ge'man like dat, passin' him hat for a col'd man. Dat do beat all I eber seed."

This made every one laugh, and the consequence was that men put their hands deeper into their pockets, and when the hat came back it had over one hundred dollars in it.

"That's for you," said the gentleman to Clem, taking out bills and silver in double handfuls.

"De half ob dat b'long to Yum, fo' he help me holah," said Clem, generously.

Meanwhile some one had been sent on to the next station, and after the delay of an hour the broken rail was replaced by a good one, and the train proceeded

Clem said nothing about the occurrence, though he was scolded for loitering on the way, but the next day Mr. Nettlebone received a call from one of the officers of the road, and then he heard all about it.

In addition to the subscription taken up among the passengers, the company presented Clem and Yum with one hundred dollars for their prompt action by which many lives had been saved.

Upon counting up their money, it was found that they each had something more than a hundred dollars apiece.

"What are you going to do with it?" asked Uncle Peter.

"I'se gwine to get married," snickered Clem.

"Peggy tol' me she hab me when I'se got a hund'ed dollah, an' dere he is."

"Me get mally, too," chattered Yum. "Gottee hundled dollee, makee more, washee, washee."

Clem took his hundred dollars to Peggy, and claimed the fulfillment of her promise.

The money did the business, and that yellow gave her consent at once.

Yum went to Mrs. Roriarity, and, in fact, the story had gotten around by this time, showed her his money and proposed marriage.

"Begob, I think I might do worse," she exclaimed.

"Yis, Mr. Yum, I'll be yer woife, for I'm tired av workin', an' want a rist."

That afternoon Clem got all four together and said:

"Now, frien's and bredren, dere am no use wastin' time, an' I 'pose dat we gets married to-night."

"Dat belly nice," chuckled Yum.

"We all go to de same pahson—Mistah Wash'ton Tarheel, down to de village, and get married, an den we goes on a tear togeder."

"Faix, it's on a tower ye mane," explained Mrs. Roriarity.

"Ob c'ose dat am what I mean."

That evening, dressed in their best, the two loving couples stood in front of the Reverend George Washington Tarheel in the parlor of his palatial mansion to be married.

Clem looked more dizzy than ever in a dress-suit, and Peggy, in a becoming gown and a long white veil, looked just like a tea-rose in full bloom.

Yum was gotten up regardless in imitation of Clem, and although the buxom Mrs. Roriarity, in full bridal costume, would have made two of him, the colored parson was about to make one of them both.

"Dis am de happies' moment ob my life," chuckled Clem.

"Yum feel likee mornin' stiar," added his companion.

"Silence in de co't-house, bredren," said the reverend moke.

Then the victims took their positions, and in a few minutes more Mr. and Mrs. Clem Brown and Monsieur and Madame Yum Bung were ready to receive the congratulations of their friends.

## CHAPTER XXX.

AFTER the wedding the two couples went to a hotel in the village and had supper.

The landlord made a fuss at first, but upon Clem's presenting him with a munificent pecuniary consideration, he weakened.

After supper, which meal was quite a hilarious one, Clem proposed that they go off on their tour at once.

To this the ladies objected, on the ground that they had only their bridal garments with them.

Traveling around the country in white dresses and veils was hardly the thing, of course.

"Den we hab to go up an' tol' de boss," said Clem.

"Bossee no likee, can do oder t'ing," laughed Yum.

"Faith, I don't care whether he loikes it or not," said Mrs. Yum. "I'll do as I please."

Finally it was decided to go to the house in a carriage, remain there over night, and start away the first thing in the morning.

As soon as day broke, therefore, a carriage was at the door, and into it piled Mr. and Mrs. Brown and Yum Bung and wife, the trunks being put on top.

Just before the party started out came Pat Malone, wanting to know what the noise was all about.

"An' phat's this?" he asked. "Phat does all this mane?"

"It manes that I'm mar'ed, Mither Malone, an' I'm off an me weddin' tower."

"Married, is it? Howly shmoke! An' is it to the naygur ye're mar'd, faith?"

"No, it isn't; it's to Mr. Yum, begorrah."

"Faix, that's as bad, in my opinion, Misses Yum Bung."

"Nobody axed ye for it Mither Malone, sor, an' yez can kape it till it's wanted."

"An' phat's the naygur doin' wid yez? Sure, ye haven't mar'd both curiosities?"

"Shet yo' mouf, yo' ig'rant Irishman," laughed Clem. "Dis am my wife," indicating Peggy, "an' yo' mus' treat her wif respec'."

"Tare an' ounds! is it getting married yez are, the four av yez? Faix, an' when did it come aff?"

"Las' night."

"An' yez niver tould any av uz, ye vilyan?"

"Didn' want common folks at de weddin'," sniffed Peggy.

"Arrah, wud yez moind that?" cried Pat. "I'd loike to have an ould shoe to throw afther yez. Faix, I'd wish it might dash yez brains out, only ye have none."

"Good-mornin' to ye, Mither Malone," answered Mrs. Yum. "Yez can call an me afther me return from me weddin' tower."

"Dive ahead!" shouted Yum, and the driver cracked his whip and rattled away.

Of course the news spread, and before an hour every one in the house knew what had happened.



The twins felt particularly sore at not having been invited to the wedding.

They realized that they had been chiseled out of the grandest opportunity in their lives to work off a magnificent snap.

"Think of the fun we missed."

"It's a regular cold shake."

"Never have another such chance."

"It's too mean to think of."

"Just wait till they come home."

"Won't we have some fun?"

"Bet your last nickel on that."

"Won't we make it warm for 'em?"

"As hot as buttered toast."

"Then that's all right."

"Oh, it's quite serene."

When Uncle Peter heard of the affair he first laughed, and then said:

She loved her brother, of course, but she had her weather eye fixed on his fortune for all that.

If she could secure a big lump or the whole of it, for that matter, for her boys, she could die happy.

Bing himself was well-off, but she wanted his boodle for herself.

Her brother's money would fix the boys for life, and that was what she aimed at.

He had no children of his own and no other nephews or nieces, and consequently could make the twins his heirs as well as not.

In the course of a day or so she and her husband arrived, presumably to take their boys home.

As for Bing, he was honest enough about it.

He thought it was high time the boys left their uncle, as he did not care to sponge any longer on the old man.

That's the way he looked at the thing.

"I don't want 'em to go!" blurted out Uncle Peter.

"They shan't go."

"But their education, Peter?"

"Bother their education! I can bring all the tutors they want right to the house."

"But consider the expense."

"Hang the expense. They are going to have all I've got, in the end, and I guess if I want to give it to them before I die I can do it."

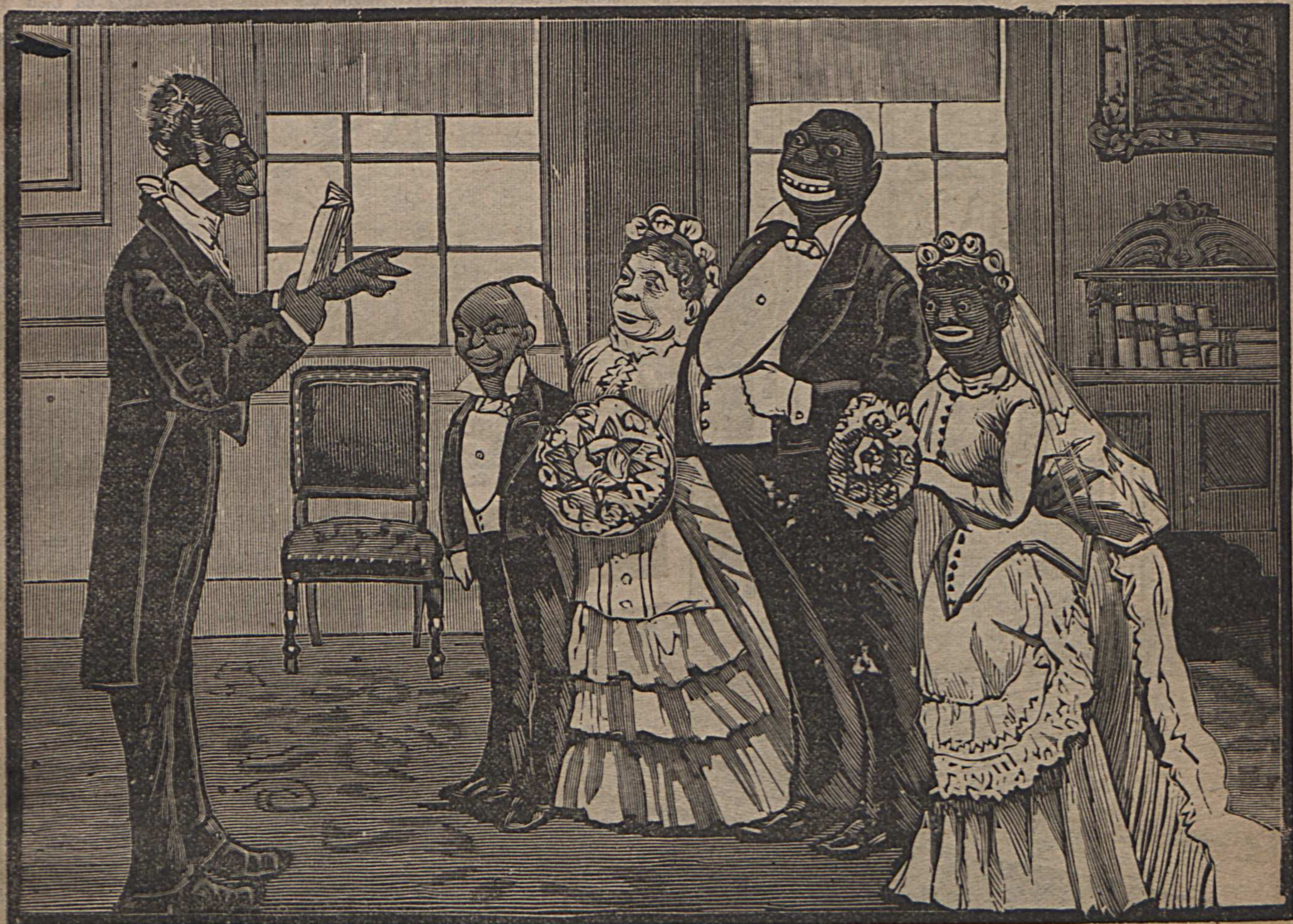
"But think of the trouble?"

"Confound the trouble!" roared Peter. "I'd have ten times as much trouble if they went away."

"But consider my feelings as a mother," remarked the wily woman. "How can I be parted from my dear boys?"

"Blast it all! you shan't be parted! But neither shall I."

"What do you mean?" asked Mrs. Bing, feigning the greatest surprise.



"Dis am de happies' moment ob my life," chuckled Clem. "Yum feel likee mornin' stlar," added his companion. "Silence in de co't-house, bredren," said the reverend moke.

"They're a set of fools the whole lot of them."

"Clem is all right," said Timmy.

"Maybe so, but the housekeeper has put her foot in it."

"How so?"

"She had an easy position here, and had saved up money."

"Well, Yum is saving."

"Yes, but he isn't fond of work, and won't do any as long as his money lasts."

"Clem is lazy, too."

"But Peggy isn't, and she'll make that big nigger fly around as he never did here."

"That'll be fun," said both boys.

"Well, I'm glad he's gone, anyhow, for he'd have to go pretty soon."

"How so?" asked the twins.

"Why, your mother writes that she is going to take you home pretty soon, and I wouldn't have that big moke loafing around after you had gone."

The boys were sorry that they were so soon to go home, for they had never had such good times in all their lives as they had had during the past summer and fall.

They had grown tall and fat, had the rosiest of cheeks, and were in the best of health. The thought of returning to the city, therefore, was by no means agreeable.

However, they could not hope to stay with their good old uncle always, and so they made up their minds that they must part at last.

Matters were to turn out differently, however, from what they had expected.

That mother of theirs, old Peter's sister, was a rare schemer, as we have all along indicated.

His wife thought otherwise, however.

It did not take her long to look over the ground and see how matters stood.

"So your housekeeper has left you, Peter?" she asked at a favorable moment.

"Yes, she married a Chinaman—the one you saw here."

"How shocking!" exclaimed the female diplomat, elevating her eyebrows.

"Yes, it is rather foolish."

"Of course she can never return after that?"

"Oh, I don't know," began the old man.

"Peter Nettlebone! how can you think of it?" she cried. "It would not be at all proper."

"Wouldn't it?" asked her brother very mildly.

"You mustn't think of it for an instant."

"Well, then, I won't," said he, quite resigned.

"That's right."

"But I must have a housekeeper," he said at length.

"Yes, it's necessary that you should."

"I liked Rorarity very much. Nera is too young, and I don't suppose Peggy would do either, for the same reason."

"Yes, you must have an older person."

"Where am I going to get her? I don't know anything about picking out housekeepers, an old bachelor like me."

"I might find you one," mildly suggested the managing sister.

"I wish you would. Get somebody who will be kind to the boys."

"But the dear children are going away, you know," said the female Bing, adroitly.

Oh, she was a schemer, she was! and was working the thing up in fine style.

"I haven't a housekeeper, have I?" asked Peter.

"No."

"And I want one?"

"Yes."

"And I won't part with the boys?"

"No?" interrogatively.

"No!" very decidedly.

"Well?" and it was a mighty deep well, too, for General Bing felt that she had brought things to a crisis.

"Well, then, it's all right here in one sentence."

"Yes?"

"You and Bing must make your home with me, and you can manage the house. Bing can go to the city every day, if he likes, as well as not. Then you don't leave your boys and they don't leave me, and we're a happy family all around."

"I'll think of it," said his sister.

She had thought of it, and was congratulating herself that the offer had come from old Peter instead of her being obliged to suggest it herself.

The whole business had come out just as she had hoped, and now she was ready to hug herself because it had.

"Don't need to think of it," said the old man. "You can decide now as well as any time."

"But Bing might object?"

"Nonsense! Bing always does as you want him to do."

"Well, I'll tell him what you say."

"But don't you think it a good plan?" persisted the old fellow, getting warmed up again.

"Y-yes," she hesitatingly replied.



That settled the whole business.

"There's no y-yes about it, but yes, straight up and down!" he roared, "so please consider the think as settled."

"You are too kind," she answered, and then followed that up with a lot more taffy which he swallowed like a little major.

Of course the boys were delighted when they heard of the arrangement, and called their uncle a regular old brick.

When Bing heard of it, he stuck his hands in his pockets, whistled softly and said, with a grin:

"I knew what the old woman was up to, all along, and now she's carried her point. Trust any woman to do that when she puts what little mind she has on anything."

The arrangement suited him well enough, and he knew that he would have a quieter time of it if he didn't kick.

or do any work for him, and she meant business when she said it.

It was tough on Clem, but when he had gone supperless to bed on two occasions, he concluded that there was no help for it.

One day, a month after this, and a hard month it had been for him, he was going home with a pole slung over his shoulder, a whitewash-pail hung on each end, and his brush in his right hand.

His clothes, his shoes, and his battered high hat were spattered with whitewash, and his black cheeks had a dab on them as well.

He had done a hard day's work, hard for anybody and worse for him, and was dead tuckered out.

His road that evening led him past Yum Bung's wash emporium.

As he approached he saw a sight to make the angels weep.

Through the big front window of the one story

man dat kin cal'late on de future, am got a straight tip an' had bettah wo'k it fo' all he's wuth."

He was about to pass on when he saw Peggy coming down the street rigged out in her dandiest style.

Of course that meant no supper, or at best, a cold one, when he reached home.

Then he was riled, for a fact.

"I change all dis," he growled, "and I begin right here."

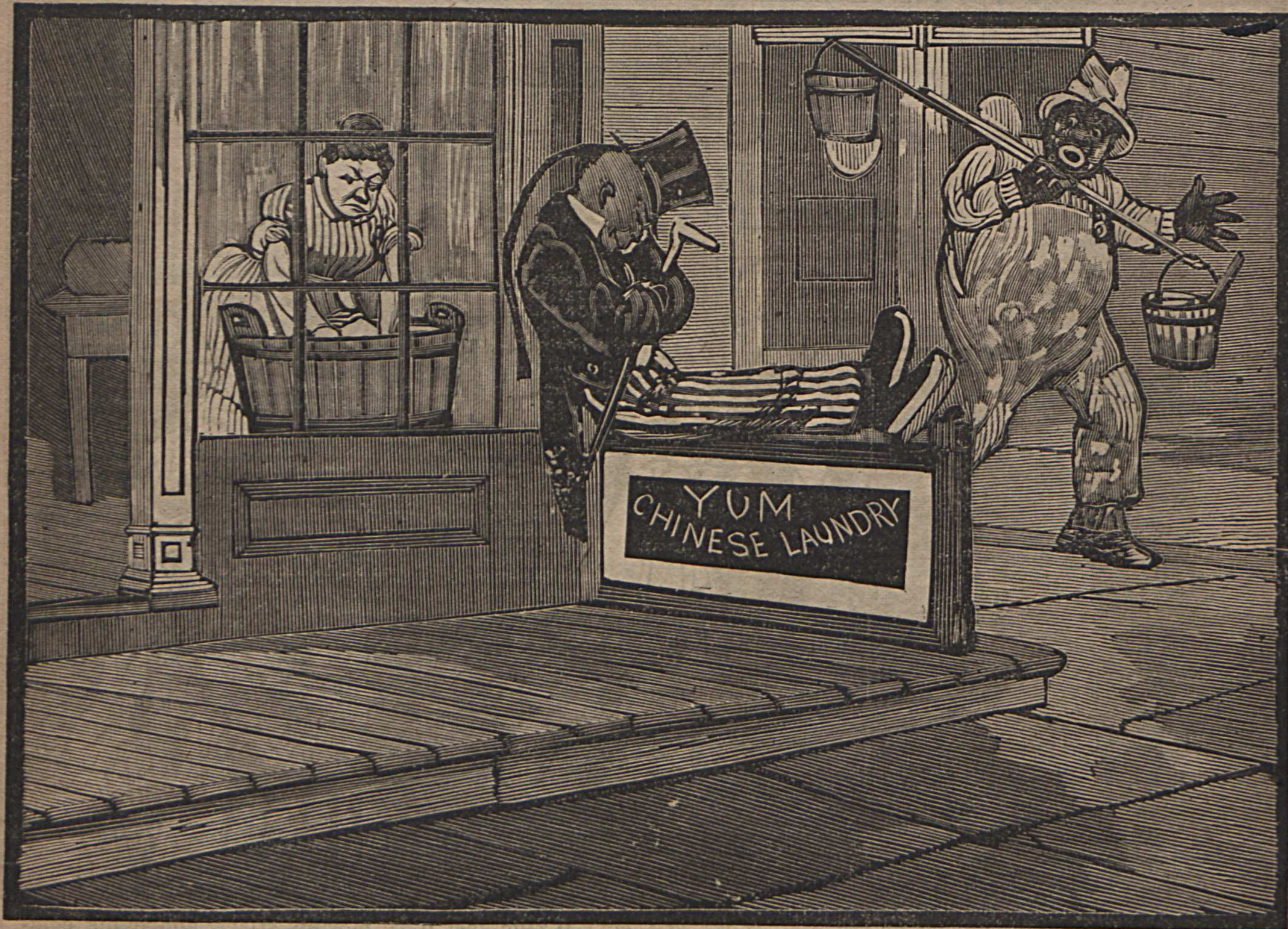
Then up with his brush, and down with his pails, he prepared for action.

Sousing the brush into the fullest of the pails, he loaded it up, drew back a step and banged that sleeping Chinaman right over the head.

"Dere now, took dat, yo' lazy, good-for-nuffin' headen," he sputtered.

Mrs. Yum looked up, saw what he had done, and cried:

"Begob, it's spunk ye have afther all, Clem, me



"Some folks hab a mighty easy time in dis worl'," he sighed, "but deir name isn't Clem Brown." "Dere am dat good-fo'-nuffin Chinymen," he continued, "a-loafin' an' a-snoozin' while de missis am wo'kin' like de ol' scratch, an' heah I is gwine home dead beat out to fin' dat wife ob mine gaddin' round town an' no suppah ready!"

"It takes a woman to wheedle Old Nick himself," he laughed, as he lighted a fresh cigar. "and the old gal has as much craft as a dozen of 'em."

Everything was fixed, therefore, and the boys were settled in their new home.

They could have as much fun as before, and they would be going on with their education as well, so that the new order of things worked well in more ways than one.

In a week's time the bridal party returned and settled in the village.

Yum opened a Chinese laundry, and began to do well, working away like a good fellow.

Clem's wife opened a dress-making establishment, and Clem loafed around and winked at all the pretty girls in the street.

This state of things continued for about a month, and then there came a change.

Yum no longer stood over the tub or wielded the smoothing-iron.

He installed his wife in his position, while he loafed around town, collected bills, smoked bad cigars and drank kill-me-quick gin.

Mrs. Yum now had all the work to do, while Mr. Yum did the elegant.

A change had also taken place in the domestic economy of the Brown household.

Peggy had grown tired of seeing Clem hanging about doing nothing, and she had put her foot down solid.

She got a couple of brushes and a whitewashing outfit, and told him to go to work or starve.

If he did not get a job every day she would not cook

cleansing factory could be seen Mrs. Yum working her soul out over a big wash-tub.

She had lost her jaunty appearance and looked a very slave indeed.

And where was her lord and master meantime?

There he was stretched out on a bench which served for a sign as well, his back against the wall and his feet extended.

On the sign was the legend:

"YUM BUNG, Chinese Laundry."

Mrs. Bung was wrestling with the washtub, while Mr. Bung reclined on top of his sign, a plug hat over his eyes, a big cigar in his mouth, and his arms folded across his breast.

He was asleep, and had probably been around with the boys and filled up on gin.

And this was the picture of toil and rest, of industry and idleness which met the eyes of that hard-working moke.

Poor Clem stood balancing his pails, and gazed in sadness on the scene before him.

"Some folks hab a mighty easy time in dis worl'," he sighed, "but deir name isn't Clem Brown."

"Dere am dat good-fo'-nuffin Chinymen," he continued, "a-loafin' an' a-snoozin' while de missis am wo'kin' like de ol' scratch, an' heah I is gwine home dead beat out to fin' dat wife ob mine gaddin' 'round town an' no suppah ready!"

It was sad indeed to think of, and Clem dropped a tear on the white dab on his cheek and washed it out.

"Sich am de changes ob life," he mused, "an' de

jewel, and it's proud I am av ye the day. It wud be better for us both if we'd married aich ither instead av bein' as we are."

Clem's sudden assault had awakened Yum, of course, and he now rolled off the bench, as mad as a hornet.

"Blamee? Whatee bout?" he chattered.

Just then along came Clem's wife.

"Yo' see dat?" cried Clem. "Dat wha' I do to dat lazy Chinymen, an' I serbe yo' de same way ef yo' don' go home dis minnit, take off dem fine close, an' git my hash ready."

Peggy was too astonished to speak, and Yum wanted to fight.

"None ob yo' nonsense," cried Clem. "Go in dere an' get to wo'k at dat tub, else I cobers yo' all ober wif whitewash."

Clem meant business, and he followed Yum up till he was forced to obey.

"Dere now," said Clem, as Yum thrust his arms into the tub and rubbed away on an old shirt, "yo' does de washin' an' de missis does de p'nin'. Dat's fair."

"Faith, I'd not complain at that," observed Mrs. Yum, "but it's doin' it all that breaks me back."

"Jes' yo' diwde de wo'k an' de loafin' eben, else I break yo' neck fo' youse," said Clem to Yum.

"Yum bossee in own housee," replied the Chinaman, grinning.

"No, sah, yo' am not; you am bofe ob yo' de boss; so mia' dat, fo' ef I cotch yo' at any mo' funny business I smash yo' jaw."



Then he went outside and said to his wife, who had witnessed the whole scene:

"Where was yo' gwine, Misses Brown?"

"To call on Phoebe Jackson."

"Am my suppah ready?"

"No, sah, but I thought yo' might hab it cold fo' once or wait fo' me."

"Dat am all nonsense, an' yo' know it, an' ef yo' don' get home dis minit I'll raise a row."

Peggy began to snivel, but Clem took her by the ear, marched her off, and said:

"None ob dat. Dere am gwine to be a diwision ob de wo'k in my house jes' de same as dere is in oder

houses, an' I wan' yo' to undahstan' it now, wifout no mo' talk!"

Clem had got his back up at last, and good was likely to come of it.

After that Yum Bung didn't dare to loaf about, for Clem gave him a thrashing once or twice, and that cured him.

Mrs. Yum did her share of the work and was happy, and Yum, himself, soon found that things went on better when both worked than when one did all the work and the other loafed.

Clem and his wife got on better, also, when there was a division of labor, and so the trouble ended.

[THE END.]

"Ef folks, when dey git spliced, would look mo' af-tah each odah's comfort dan fo' deir own," remarked Clem, philosophically, "dere would be less trouble in dis worl' an' not half so much wo'k fo' de lawyers."

All hands got on better after Clem's little lesson on the practical workings of married life, and our old friends are now doing first-rate.

As for the twins, they are as jolly as ever, and Uncle Peter grows fonder of them every day.

Having, as we hope, amused and delighted our readers with the recital of their adventures, we now take our leave of them and the clever young rascals, THOSE QUIET TWINS.

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